UNITED THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

MAKING VISIBLE THE CONNECTION:

THE ROLE OF CROSS RACIAL AND CROSS CULTURAL APPOINTMENTS IN NURTURING INCLUSIVENESS IN THE CONGREGATIONS OF THE MICHIGAN AREA OF THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

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United's theological and academic environment helped cultivate this project. For this blessing, I am grateful.

PREFACE

Since coming to the United States of America in 1983 as an international student, there has been within my soul a basic *dis-ease*[1] with how and why churches are racially and culturally segregated. This situation has negative impact on the Church's ministry, witness, and credibility. Increasing numbers of ethnic-specific[2] denominations have emerged either as a consequence of or a response to this situation. The Church's professions of faith in Jesus Christ must be matched with demonstrations of holistic and inclusive faith, witness and ministry.

I am a native of Liberia, West Africa and was born in Ganta at the foothills of the Nimba Mountains in a United Methodist hospital. My up-bringing in Mano culture, Liberian society, and the Church has influenced me to become deeply interested in the Church as an inclusive community of all God's children. After all, I am one of twenty two children in my family and grew up having to live in community. My family is a large extended community including aunts, uncles, cousins, in-laws, and other

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[1]Dis-ease is used in this dissertation to connote a basic state of dissatisfaction. See glossary for definition.

[2]Ethnic-specific is used here in reference to the specific make-up of ethnicity. For definition, see glossary.

extended family members. The concept of "Church" as a faith community means so much to me because of how it parallels family and social systems in Liberian society.

Adverse negative influences of race upon the make-up and ministries of the Church (such as racial discrimination, segregation, indifference, intolerance, bigotry, and hatred) are an affront upon the credibility, integrity, meaning, and purpose of the Christian faith. The Church needs to confess, repent, forgive and be forgiven, and heal from its racism.

How can the Church be faithful to its divine calling to be the body of Christ? What is the role of pastoral leadership in nurturing inclusiveness within the Church? What role can and must cross-racial and cross-cultural appointments play in this process? These critical questions linger before all who are concerned about discipleship making in this multiracial and multicultural society.

No longer must the secular idea of ethnic separation (or cleansing) for religious harmony be allowed to become a mainstream theology or ecclesiology. There are instances where ethnic separation may be necessary; for example, in cases where ethnic hostility has escalated to uncontrollable extents. In such instances, ethnic separation must always be understood as the exception and not the rule. Ethnic,

racial, or cultural separation is not a goal of Christianity. Rather, the goal of Christianity is the building of God's Kingdom of justice and righteousness for all people. The Church, in order to be the Church, must authenticate the example of the Messiah who died for the salvation of all people.

The Doctor of Ministry degree program and my recent appointment to the office of Urban Missioner (Associate Council Director) of the Detroit Conference of The United Methodist Church have afforded me an opportunity to work on one aspect of this *dis-ease* in an intentional and comprehensive way.

Consequently, Making Visible The Connection: The Role of Cross-Racial and Cross-Cultural Appointments in Nurturing Inclusiveness in The Congregations of The Michigan Area of The United Methodist Church is an attempt to offer suggestions on how the itinerant system can nurture[3] inclusiveness through cross racial and cross cultural appointments. Despite progress made in racial and cultural inclusiveness, the Michigan Area[4] of the United Methodist Church still has a long way to go.

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[3]See glossary for definition of "nurture".

[4]See glossary for a definition of what the Michigan Area includes. Also, a map indicating all districts within the two conferences of the Michigan Area is located in Table 1 in the appendix for your information.

Since the first Michigan Area Open Itineracy Workshop held February 10-11, 1989 in Lansing, the Michigan Area of The United Methodist Church has experienced increasing numbers of congregations and pastors who are willing to enter into cross- racial and cross-cultural ministries. With increasing numbers of cross-racial and cross-cultural pastoral appointments[5] has emerged a new awareness of some basic concerns:

* equipping Church leaders for relevant and effective ministry in an increasingly multiracial and multi-cultural society.
* leadership drain on nonwhite ethnic congregations.
* inadequate recruitment of competent leadership for a truly "open" itineracy.
* lack of clear purpose and objectives for cross-racial and cross-cultural appointments.
* increase in supply pool of ethnic pastors for cross-racial and cross-cultural appointment.
* shift in the Church's understanding of inclusiveness and multicultural ministry.

Increases in cross-racial and cross-cultural appointments bring new challenges and opportunities for United Methodist congregations to effectively prepare for, accept, and sustain cross-racial and cross-cultural appointments?

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[5]See glossary for definition of Cross-racial appointment and cross-cultural appointment.

This project raises critical issues and offers some helpful suggestions to assist the Bishop, the Cabinets[6], pastors, and local congregations in making or accepting effective cross-racial and cross-cultural appointments. It is a first step toward racial and cultural inclusiveness in the congregations. Improvements in the appointment process are critical to the nurture of strong healthy relationships and ministries. The project addresses some critical needs of cross-racial and cross-cultural appointments and, hopefully, be a catalyst for a denomination-wide discussion and celebration of what God is doing among people of various races, cultures, and tribes within the Church.

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[6]See glossary for definition of "Cabinet" from a United Methodist perspective.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS.....ii

PREFACE.....iii

LIST OF TABLES.....xi

GLOSSARY.....xii

ABSTRACT.....xv

CHAPTER

1. INTRODUCTION..... 1

Context and Need..... 3

A Proposed Solution.....15

2. THEOLOGICAL FOUNDATION.....16

Nature Of God.....19

Human Nature.....23

Sin and Racism.....25

Ecclesiology And The Itinerant System.....30

Priesthood of All Believers.....32

Conclusion.....34

3. GOALS AND METHODOLOGICAL ASSUMPTIONS.....36

Itineracy In A Multiracial Situation.....45

Power, Control, and Authority.....48

Cultural Competence and Racial Maturity.....51

Open Itineracy.....54

Multicultural and Multiracial Ministries.....55

Support Systems.....60

4. THE PROJECT.....63

Project Components.....63

Project Objective and Goal.....64

Goals For Personal Growth.....65

Process For Accomplishing Personal Goals.....66

Goals For Conferences.....72

Model For Appointment.....72

Methodology.....77

5. SUMMARY OF EVALUATIONS.....84

Evaluations.....84

Recommendations.....87

6. MULTIRACIAL AND MULTICULTURAL MINISTRIES IN THE TWENTY FIRST CENTURY.....88

Future Directions.....88

Applicable Settings.....89

Limitations and Possibilities.....90

APPENDICES.....92

Cabinet Survey.....93

Workshop Pre Test and Post Test Forms.....94

Workshop Evaluation Form.....97

List of Project Consultants.....98

Workshop Schedule.....99

Goals, Methods, and Results of Michigan Area Workshop.....101

Handbook on Cross-Racial and Cross-Cultural Appointments.....114

Sample Sermons.....157

Tables.....173

ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY.....183

LIST OF TABLES

Table Page

1. Map of Michigan Area (Detroit and West Michigan Conferences) of The United Methodist Church.....174

2. Cross Racial and Cross Cultural Appointments, Michigan Area, Personal Information.....175

3. What Are The Purposes of Cross-Racial/Cross-Cultural Appointment? Pretest and Posttest Results.....176

4. What Are The Goals of Cross-Racial/Cross-Cultural Ministries? Pretest and Posttest Results.....177

5. The Five Most Important Needs of A Pastor, Pretest and Posttest Results.....178

6. The Five Most Important Needs of A Congregation, Pretest and Posttest Results.....179

7. Workshop Helpfulness In Exploring Cross-Racial and Cross-Cultural Appointments.....180

8. Workshop's Encouragement and/or Supportiveness To Participants, Pretest and Posttest Results.....181

9. Cross-Racial and Cross-Cultural Appointments Are Good For The Church. Personal Views.....182

NOTE: These tables represent data gathered from participants at the Michigan Area Worshop on Cross-Racial and Cross-Cultural Appointment (April 22-23, 1994) in Okemos.

GLOSSARY

NOTE: This glossary helps the reader with definitions and connotations helpful in understanding this document and some of which are unique to the United Methodist Church.

Affirmative action. Legal policies designed to rectify past injustices in the way people are treated.

Alienation. A state of being detached from that which is essential to life and well being.

Ambassador. A designated representative or messenger.

Bargaining leverage. An advantage in determining and influencing the appointment process.

Cabinet. A group of superintendents (ordained elders) appointed by the bishop to assist in conference leadership and clergy responsibilities.

Connection. The relationship among United Methodist people (mainly ministers) and institutions around the world.

Contextual associates. A group of pastors and lay persons serving together on the planning team for this project.

Control. The means by which situations and opportunities are administered and ordered.

Cross cultural appointment. The assignment of ordained pastors to congregations and communities where at least majority of the people belong to a cultural heritage different than that of the pastor.

Cross racial appointment. The assignment of ordained pastors to congregations and communities where, at least, a majority of people belong to a race other than that of the pastor.

Cultural competency. The ability to function effectively in a given cultural context.

Deacon. An ordained clergy who is on probation pending a second ordination (to the office of Elder) in the United Methodist Church.

Dehumanization. The mistreatment of persons in a manner less worthy than is deserving for a human being.

Detroit Conference. The assembly of some 500 congregations of the United Methodist Church in eastern lower peninsula and all of the upper peninsula of Michigan.

Diaconal Minister. A lay person consecrated to a professional responsibility in the Church (such as in areas of music, education, administration, youth ministry).

Dis-ease. An unsettling disposition, usually associated with feelings of dissatisfaction and disagreement.

District Superintendent. An ordained elder appointed by the Bishop to oversee pastoral care, appointment, and administration in a district within the United Methodist Church. A member of the bishop's cabinet.

Divine invocation. A gathering brought into being by the will and call of God.

Ecumenical convocation. A gathering of various parts of Christ's holy and universal Church across confessional, doctrinal and denominational lines.

Elder. An ordained office with full authority and privilege in the United Methodist Church. An ordained clergy who has completed probationary status.

Estrangement. A state of separation. A condition of being apart from that which is essential to life. Alienation.

Ethnic-specific. Being of a particular ethnic origin, or, representing a clearly identifiable ethnicity.

Indigenous. Being of native origin. Coming from the inner core of one's being.

Itinerant system. A method by which ordained clergy are rotated in appointment from year to year within the United Methodist Church.

Jurisdiction. A regional organization bringing together annual conferences of the United Methodist Church in the United States of America. One of six regional groupings of the United Methodist Church in the United States.

Ku Klux Klan. A White supremacist group, committed to the destruction of all people of color and to the separation of the races. An antisemitic and anti-Catholic group.

Laity. Members of the Church who are neither consecrated nor ordained to any episcopal office.

Michigan Area. The two United Methodist Conferences within the state of Michigan designated as one episcopal area.

Modus operandi. Method of operation. A means by which things are done or administered.

Neo-nazis. A contemporary movement of White supremacists who emulate and seek to revive the regime of Nazism.

Nurture. To cultivate. To mold the character and build relationships.

Open Itineracy. The possibility for pastoral appointment to any charge within a United Methodist conference.

Paradigmatic shifts. Changes in the way things are conceived or uunderstood to be. A move away from past realities.

Pastor parish relations committee. A committee of lay persons within a United Methodist congregation, primarily responsible for pastoral and personnel matters. The committee which participates in the appointment process.

Racial identification. Knowledge of oneself. The ability to be confident and comfortable with one's own race.

Re-present. Imitation. Repeat. To stand in place of.

Secular world. The nonreligious realm of the world. That part of the world which is not guided by Christianity.

Skin heads. A branch of the White supremacist movement, usually known by shaved heads, committed to racial hatred and separatism.

Transitional city churches. Inner city congregations that are experiencing changing demographics. Often historically White membership Churches with increasing non-White membership.

West Michigan Conference. The United Methodist conference which covers the western half of the lower peninsula of the state of Michigan.

ABSTRACT

MAKING VISIBLE THE CONNECTION:

THE ROLE OF CROSS RACIAL AND CROSS CULTURAL APPOINTMENTS IN NURTURING INCLUSIVENESS IN THE CONGREGATIONS OF THE MICHIGAN AREA OF THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

by

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This project is designed to convene practitioners, prospects and experts of cross racial and cross cultural ministries in order to explore, encourage and support opportunities and strategies for effective cross racial and cross cultural appointments. This report outlines theological bases for cross racial and cross cultural appointment. It also includes methodology which entails determination of critical issues, preparation of an agenda, recruitment of participants and leaders, scheduling and implementing a workshop, and summarizing feedback. The project yielded positive results as participants and cabinets asked for the development of a handbook to resource their work on cross racial and cross cultural appointments.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

One of the unique characteristics of The United Methodist Church, as a denomination, is its itinerant system. The itinerant system "is the accepted method of The United Methodist Church by which ordained ministers are appointed by the bishop to fields of labor".[7]

Unlike the congregational system, which calls and appoints its own pastors at the congregational level, the itinerant system allows for a collaboration of local congregations, pastors, and the Bishop's Cabinets on each pastoral appointment. The basic criteria for appointment-making in the United Methodist itinerant system are "the unique needs of a charge in a particular setting and also the gifts and evidence of God's grace of a particular pastor."[7]

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[7]The Book Of Discipline Of The United Methodist Church, (Nashville: The United Methodist Publishing House, 1992), 235.

[7]Ibid., 289.

These criteria require a high level of sensitivity to the situation and/or circumstance of the congregation and of the pastor. The congregation is assessed on membership size, financial condition, quality of lay leadership, history, theology, prejudices, spiritual life, ministry, mission to community, forms of witness, basis for adding new members, reasons for losing members, and qualities and functions of pastoral ministry needed to fulfill the mission and goals of the congregation. The pastor is assessed on the basis of issues such as the needs and concerns of the pastor's spouse and family, spiritual and personal sensibility, academic and career background, skills and abilities. In brief, the United Methodist itinerant system[8] is a system of consultations and covenant-making, leading to pastoral appointments to charges across the denomination.

The itinerant system has many advantages. Negative influences which racism and cultural insensitivity wield in the appointment making process must be dealt with in a proactive manner. Expectations that a pastor must be of the same racial and/or ethnic background as the congregation of appointment must be challenged and upgraded in order to break down barriers and to build up the body of the Church.

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[8]See glossary for definition of "itinerant system".

The Church must prevent race and culture alone from defining the nature of Christian community and ministry. Christian community involves more than any one particular racial, ethnic, or cultural group can offer. Christian community transcends the requirements of race, culture, and ethnicity. It brings all races, cultures, and ethnicities together into a new reality. A detailed basis for this position is presented in Chapter 2.

CONTEXT AND NEED:

The history of the United Methodist itinerant system dates to the first half of the eighteenth century. Reverend John Wesley, though never serving a circuit, itinerated between them as supervisor on horse back, preaching and teaching the gospel of salvation and justification through Jesus Christ. Wesley believed that a preacher was to keep riding the circuit rather than being stationed in any one location permanently. For Wesley, the urgency of preaching the gospel to nonbelievers was always a priority over the personal needs of any preacher.

Wesley believed the preacher must be available to all who needed to hear the gospel. In his day, there were few ordained preachers, and they were available across a

wide and expanding frontier. Theologically and practically, the itineracy was and is good for the Church. It allows the Church, not only to claim its universality in theory, but, to express it through its "modus operandi"[9].

With the rise of episcopal government in the Methodist Episcopal Church of the United States following the 1784 Christmas Conference in Baltimore, the Bishop was entrusted with the authority and responsibility to "make" and "fix" all pastoral appointments. The Bishop, in consultation with the Cabinet, has the responsibility to make and fix all pastoral appointments from year to year, usually at the sitting of annual conference, when the Elders[10], Deacons[11], and Laity[12] are assembled to "confer" on the work of ministry.

The itinerant system has since become the accepted system of appointment in The United Methodist Church. The itinerant system allows The United Methodist Church to be a connection which utilizes the gifts and graces of a

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[9]See glossary for definition of "modus operandi".

[10]See glossary for definition from a United Methodist perspective.

[11]See glossary for definition from a United Methodist perspective.

[12]See glossary for a definition from a United Methodist perspective.

conference pool of pastors to fulfill the task of ordained ministry.

The Detroit and West Michigan Conferences[13] of The United Methodist Church were established in June, 1969, at the merging sessions of the two Methodist Conferences and the Michigan Conference (Evangelical United Brethren) under the leadership of Bishop Dwight E. Loder. The 1969 conferences followed a nationwide merger in 1968 between the Methodist and Evangelical United Brethren Churches.

The 1968 merger involved more than a union between the Methodists and Evangelical United Brethrens. It involved the dissolution of the (historically Black) Central Jurisdiction, and its inclusion into the body politic of the remaining five historically White jurisdictions[14] of the United Methodist Church. The impact of the 1968 merger on race relations in the United Methodist Church remains a subject of much theo-logical reflection and discussion across the denomination today.

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[13]See glossary for definition of the Detroit and West Michigan Conferences.

[14]See glossary for definition of "jurisdiction" from a United Methodist perspective.

Much of this discussion centers around the 1939 Plan of Union in which the General Conferences of the Methodist Episcopal Church, the Methodist Protestant Church, and the Methodist Episcopal Church, South united. Though a majority of all the White Methodist members and annual conferences (except the North Mississippi Conference) approved the Plan of Union, an overwhelming number of African American delegates decisively rejected the Plan. Bishop James S. Thomas reports that, "Of the forty-seven African American delegates...thirty- six voted against the Plan of Union and eleven abstained".[15] The rejection, though not heeded by the majority, was primarily a dissent of the minority from "structural segregation".[16] The union inherited deep and unresolved problems.

It is out of this context of wide racial and cultural chasm that the African American population and, to various extents, the Hispanic, Native Ameircan, Asian and other racial and cultural populations of our denomination entered the union of 1968.

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[15]James S. Thomas, Methodism's Racial Dilemma: The Story of The Central Jurisdiction, (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1992), 43.

[16]Ibid, 44.

The 1968 union created a clear need for the United Methodist Church to adjust to the needs and demands of a multiracial church. This adjustment remains a part of the unfinished business of the United Methodist Church to this day. As a result, the unresolved challenges and opportunities for racial and cultural inclusiveness have been transferred to a new generation of the United Methodist Church. Faithfulness to the fulfillment this historic mission remains an unfinished business. This project addresses how and why cross-racial and cross-cultural appointments can help in building inclusiveness in the congregations of the Michigan Area of United Methodism.

In the Michigan Area, the 1968 merger brought together many rich historical and religious traditions. The Church affirmed the itineracy and subscribed to its benefits.

Through the years, the itinerant system has undergone various transitions, starting from the times when the jurisdictions were racially segregated and did not have to be concerned about where to appoint pastors of different races and cultures. Those were the days of racial and cultural homogeneity and exclusiveness. Since 1968, the challenges and the opportunities have become much different.

Diverse racial and cultural membership of the Michigan Area of The United Methodist Church offers opportunities not only in the Church's ministry and identity, but also in the Church's government to employ open itineracy in the task of building inclusiveness within the Church. The present model for pastoral appointments is largely based upon those of a racially segregated pre-merger era. Black pastors were appointed to Black congregations, White pastors to White congregations, Hispanic pastors to Hispanic congregations, Asian pastors to Asian congregations, with very few exceptions. This situation leads many Church observers to wonder whether open itineracy[17] is truly open.

The integrity and meaning of open itineracy in the United Methodist Church have been under close review since the merger of 1968, and may remain there as long as there is racial and cultural diversity within the Church. Serving in racially and culturally divided situations means that we will always need to make our covenantal connection[18], as United Methodists, visible in our disconnected world.

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[17]See glossary for definition of "open itineracy".

[18]See glossary for definition of "connection" from a United Methodist perspective.

Cross racial and cross cultural appointments are an expression of connectional identity and self understanding. In serving people of diverse racial, cultural, and ethnic backgrounds throughout Michigan, our congregations face critical racial and cultural choices.

These problems are rooted in American history and culture, from the subjugation of Native Americans and the inception of slavery to these present days of affirmative action. They must be understood as essentially historical and systemic. Duke University Professor, C. Eric Lincoln, succinctly describes this phenomenon,

> If there had been no racism in America, there would be no racial churches. As it is, we have white churches and black churches; white denominations and black denominations; American Christianity and black religion.[19]

Though not only a black/white issue, this split symbolizes the basic problem. Therefore, our congregations need to promote cross racial and cross cultural appointments as viable and necessary components of the itinerant system.

A danger to be avoided in the cross-racial and cross- cultural appointment process is a tendency toward viewing this need as essentially an affirmative action policy. It is more than affirmative action. Affirmative

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[19]C. Eric Lincoln, Race, Religion, and the Continuing American Dilemma, (New York: Hill and Wang, 1984), 31.

action, in American society, has come to connote a compromise between conservative and liberal elements in government and business to appease the have-nots and the have-too-littles without making changes in the foundations of injustice. This kind of affirmative action, says Princeton University's Cornell West, is race-based and gender-based, but does not deal with the class issues that hound this nation. West cautions progressives to:

> view affirmative action as neither a major solution to poverty nor a sufficient means to equality. We should see it as primarily playing a negative role; namely, to ensure that discriminatory practices against women and people of color are abated. Given the history of this country, it is a virtual certainty that without affirmative action racial and sexual discrimination would return with a vengeance... This claim is not based on any cynicism toward my white fellow citizens; rather, it rests upon America's historically weak will toward racial and substantive redistributive measures.[20]

Cornell West is right. Though affirmative action, as we know it, falls short of the goal, it still has a place in an indifferent society. However, the goal is still to be attained. Within the membership, leadership, and ministries of the Church, there is a deep cry for credible and faithful pursuit of the goal, namely, building the Kingdom of God here on earth in which there is equality of persons. Cross racial and cross cultural appointments can help our conferences to:

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[20]Cornell West, Race Matters (Boston: Beacon Press, 1993), 64.

* promote racial and ethnic inclusiveness
* provide pastoral leadership across racial lines
* develop appreciation for the universality of the Church
* model a true community of Christ
* respond effectively to paradigmatic shifts in human relationships within our society.

Through cross racial and cross cultural ministries, the Church witnesses to its belief that "in Christ there is neither Jew nor Greek".[21] The saving power of Jesus Christ is made more believable to prospective believers when the Church demonstrates inclusiveness.

Consequently, the annual conferences in the Michigan Area of The United Methodist Church (and probably every United Methodist Conference in America) need to develop relevant strategies and effective models for making and sustaining effective cross racial and cross cultural appointments. Hopefully, the Church will experience increasing joy as the grace of God leads it deeper into a celebration of the human family along the almost-never-travelled road of racial and cultural inclusiveness.

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[21]Galatians 3:28a (NRSV)

The Church's ministry must transcend traditions and idiosyncrasies of the people by offering a new reality within which people relate to each other as members of the human family and of the family of God. The Church must deploy leaders or pastors who are especially called and prepared to work within cross racial and cross cultural settings. To fulfill this mission, the following issues will be addressed:

* the increase of the supply of ethnic pastors for appointment
* the relevancy of ministry to its context
* the meaning of open itineracy
* the understanding of the Church as a counter culture
* the shifting understanding of inclusiveness and multicultural ministry
* the nurturing of multiracial and multicultural ministry
* the relevancy and effectiveness of ministry in an increasingly multiracial and multicultural society

Historic racial and cultural antagonisms and prejudices can cause withdrawal from diverse community building and a falling back into isolation. This is true because racial polarization presently characterizes the concentration and location of ethnic populations in Michigan.

Economic disparities cause people to live in clusters in accordance with their economic conditions. People living in racially exclusive communities are prone to similar racial expectations and may not welcome the demands of inclusiveness.

These secular trends indicate a basic need. The need is how to nurture people from their polarized way of life to a more inclusive way of life. This is a pilgrimage from exclusiveness to inclusiveness. The pilgrimage must not be led by those who believe in racial and cultural exclusion, but by those who understand, respect, appreciate, and affirm the gifts and benefits of multiculturalism and multiracialism. Those who cry for justice and those who demand peace must realize that neither will have either until all have both.

It is the basic assumption of this project that an answer to this secular dilemma comes, not from additional secular projects and experimentations, but from a spiritual approach to understanding and responding to the basic human need for community with God and with other human beings.

The Church has allowed the secular world[22], either by design or by default, to convince people that appearance is more important than substance. Consequently, the secular world has become a primary nurturer of human life, shaping character, ambition, values, principles, relationships, and expectations. The critical question is whether the Church will allow this trend to determine the nature and extent of its ministry or whether the Church will boldly choose to offer an alternative way of life based upon the teachings of Christ.

This project provides some critical theoretical and methodological resources for the Church to become proactive in establishing and expanding new models for effective cross racial and cross cultural appointments among racially and culturally polarized peoples. To show that God's design and will is for God's people to live in community as one people, despite all the harsh existential reasons to the contrary, is a goal of this project.

Through cross racial and cross cultural appointments, The United Methodist Church can offer models of witness and ministry that nurture inclusiveness in its congregations.

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[22]See glossary for definition of "Secular world". This should help with clarity of connotation.

A PROPOSED SOLUTION:

This project is based on a 1992 mandate of the General Conference, recorded in The Book of Discipline of The United Methodist Church in paragraph 530.1:

> Appointments are to be made with consideration of the gifts and evidence of God's grace of those appointed, to the needs, characteristics, and opportunities of congregations and institutions, and with faithfulness to the commitment to an open itineracy. Open itineracy means appointments are made without regard to race, ethnic origin, sex, color, marital status, or age, except for the provisions of mandatory retirement. Through appointment-making, the connectional nature of the United Methodist Church is made visible.[23]

The thesis of this project is that the Michigan Area of the United Methodist Church can be faithful to this disciplinary mandate (though not without some difficulty). Michigan is, after all, a state with racial, ethnic, and cultural diversity. This field is ripe with opportunities and challenges for inclusiveness in the ministries of the Church.

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[23]The Book of Discipline of The United Methodist Church, (Nashville: The United Methodist Publishing House, 1992), 288.

CHAPTER TWO

THEOLOGICAL FOUNDATION

"There is no longer Jew or Greek, there is no longer slave or free, there is no longer male and female; for all of you are one in Christ Jesus."[24]

Race and culture provide major opportunities and challenges to the Church. Race, as an expression of human appearance, may suggest misleading images of human nature. Culture, as an expression of human nature, may suggest values that limit human perspective. Race and culture are restrictive when perceived to be the exclusive criteria by which human nature and worth are measured.

America's continuing dilemma is that there is a wide discrepancy between its declared values and its practices of inclusiveness among its peoples. Hypocrisy and denial are prevalent in our society when it comes to race and cultural relations. But hypocrisy must never be a characteristic of the Church. The Church must always be the Church. People need help. People need redemption from estrangement[25]. People need God and each other.

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[24]Galatians 3:28 (NRSV)

[25]See glossary for definition of "estrangement".

The problem of racism in America (and for that matter, anywhere it exists) is a spiritual denial of our baptism. Racism says that we do not belong together, though our baptism brings us together into one family of God. It is a matter of sin when a person or group of persons refuses to accept every person as God's creation. Racism is spiritual blindness. It is a result of a loss of spiritual vision caused by a blinding temporal short sightedness. Only after confession of our racism can we be free to repent and seek forgiveness of our sins before God and our fellow human beings. Only when we repent and receive forgiveness are we empowered, by grace, to experience renewal of life and of community with our fellow human beings and with our God. Only when we accept that our racism is a spiritual obstacle, can we seek a spiritual healing.

God's grace offers hope and new life through the Church. The Church has never been flawless. Yet, the Church remains the Body of Christ through which the weak and heavy-laden find salvation in Christ. Through the Church God reaches out to the human family, offering healing, community, and salvation.

The Church is the primary center for spiritual healing. The Church is beckoning to an exhausted and divided world and is offering to sin sick souls the healing

balm of peace and reconciliation. When the Church faithfully offers the Kingdom of God to the people, the walls of racial separation and cultural alienation will come tumbling down, as people make their indigenous responses to the God of their nativity (creation).

It takes faithful discipleship of the Church to witness to this eternal truth; namely, that God's people are one people. Each believer must therefore fulfill his or her responsibility accordingly.

The Michigan Area of The United Methodist Church has a great opportunity to lead this movement for racial and cultural inclusiveness in Michigan. The Michigan Area of the United Methodist Church covers the entire geographic area of the State of Michigan. People of almost every conceivable race and culture live in the Detroit and West Michigan Conferences which covers a total of thirteen districts. See Table 1 in the appendix for a map detailing this area.

Our opportunity is that God has placed us in a diverse racial and cultural setting where inclusiveness is not only possible, but necessary. When the Church lives out its inclusiveness, nonbelievers will begin to take seriously the proclamations and the faith of the Church.

People desperately yearn for meaningful and purposeful lives. They want to live in healthy (inclusive) relationship to each other. Secular alternatives have failed them miserably. The ravages of their spiritual bewilderment tear them apart from each other in the painful realities of their lives. They blame each other to no avail. Their hope lies in a spiritual healing which only the Church offers today. The Church must fulfill its responsibility with seriousness, faithfulness, and urgency.

NATURE OF GOD

God is the creator, and holds together the creation in a dynamic harmony. God's purpose for human life is based on commitment to community. God's salvific effort to restore the integrity of creation from human sin is rooted in the need for community. To obey God means to accept community with God and with all persons. Dietrich Bonhoeffer warns,

> Let him who is not in community beware of being alone. Into the community you were called, the call was not meant for you alone; in the community of the called you bear your cross, you struggle, you pray... If you scorn the fellowship of the brethren, you reject the call of Jesus Christ, and

thus your solitude can only be hurtful to you.[26]

When relationship to God breaks down, human community breaks down also.

Life in community with God requires a simultaneous expression of that community within God's creation. Our relationship to God must be reflected in the way we relate to the environment and people around us. The more we become like God intends us to be, the stronger will be our community with others. The less we live like God intends us to live, the greater will be our fragmentation, not only from God, but also from our fellow human beings and from our environment.

In the gospel according to Matthew, chapter 25, human relationship to God is equated to interpersonal relations among people. "Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me".[27]

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[26]Dietrich Bonhoeffer, Life Together: A Discussion of Christian Fellowship, (San Francisco: Harper and Row, Publishers, 1954), 77.

[27]Matthew 25:40

God judges us by how we treat others *and* by how we relate to God. To affirm and uphold the integrity of family is to please God; but breaking up familial relations is a definite departure from the path of righteousness. Since all have sinned and come short of the glory of God, all stand in need of divine intervention and salvation.

Divine intervention comes, by the grace of God, when broken relations to God are restored and the human spirit is empowered to please God once again. Obedience to the will of God is the same as accepting the joys and fulfilling the responsibilities of God's community.

Our present racial and cultural separation and all accompanying schemes of *dehumanization*[28] are an affront to God's purpose for human life. The Church, as "the family of God", has a primary responsibility to model the kind of family God requires of all people.

Some of the most intelligent rationalization for racist and separatist ecclesiology is to be found wanting, especially when it is based exclusively on existential experience and not on faithfulness to the will of God. God wishes people to live, serve, and worship in community with each other. This divine intention must be taken seriously,

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[28]See glossary for definition.

especially within the Church. How can the Church be the Church if it is primarily shaped, not by faithfulness to its God, but by conformity to this world?

Though cross racial and cross cultural appointments are in infancy in the Michigan Area of The United Methodist Church, they are crucially necessary vehicles of transformation within the Church. They offer possibilities for diverse ecclesiological exposure to and experience of the bountiful richness of God's plan for human community and fullness of life. Cross racial and cross cultural appointments can become catalysts for emergence of diverse and vibrant communities of compassion which model a "foretaste of glory divine". Through cross racial and cross cultural appointments, God calls us to affirm our oneness in Christ by offering the world a glimpse of the meaning of justice, peace, and divine love. This is one way the Church can seek to be faithful to the prayer of our Lord Jesus Christ when he said, "Your kingdom come. Your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven".[29]

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[29]Matthew 6:10

HUMAN NATURE

Human nature has potential for doing good as well as evil. It has the innate necessity to live in community as well as the existential capacity to experience isolation. Designed by the Creator God, human nature is ever seeking after communion with God and with God's creation.

Deep at the foundations of racism is a yearning for human acceptance and community, though in a very limited and perverted way. Down-trodden people, like any one else, yearn for meaning in life. Their yearning is based on the search for meaning in life as suggested by C. Eric Lincoln.

> Perhaps more than any other people since the Israelites were enslaved in Egypt, the Blackamerican has been shaped and characterized by the unique place religion has occupied in his personal life and in the common destiny of the race. His American experience is inseparable from his religious heritage because for much of that history there was little else to offer meaning to existence, or to fall back upon for strength to confront the exigencies of his distressed condition.[30]

The search for partnership, even in racist conduct, is an expression of a deeply seated human need for affirmation and companionship. Human life is meaningless in isolation from God and from human community. The vilest

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[30]C. Eric Lincoln, Race, Religion, and the Continuing American Dilemma, (New York: Hill and Wang, 1984), 33-34.

racist will tell you that his or her family or group of friends are the most important things in life. Hate groups like the *Ku Klux Klan*[31], *skin heads*[32], and *neo Nazis*[33] insist that their objective is to preserve their race, their people. Theirs is a perversion of that which is good. The perversion of good is evil. It is unacceptable to build up any people at the expense of others.

Human nature has the capacity for perversion as well as holiness. God has endowed us with the capacity to choose and to face the consequences of our choices. Sin is a reality because human choice is a reality. Human choice has potential for sin. Racial hatred and ethnic cleansing, as parts of our social system, are expressions of human sin: alienation[34] from God which leads to alienation from each other. When a person hates another person, both the hater and the hated are forced, by hatred, to be estranged. Estrangement is unhealthy for a Christian because it negates community; and God calls people into healthy community with each other and with God.

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[31]See definition in glossary.

[32]See glossary for definition.

[33]See definition in glossary.

[34]See glossary for definition of "alienation".

Human nature is redeemable because of the grace of God which saves us from sin by transforming our lives and guiding our spirits into ever deepening experiences of love, peace, justice, and community.

SIN AND RACISM

Sin is human disobedience to the will of God. Sin causes alienation from God and from God's creation. Alienation leads to destruction of life, the inescapable consequence, essence, and manifestation of sin.

Racism is a form and an expression of sin. As a form, racism is rejection of God's will. Racism allows human beings to design for themselves social systems based on human *prejudices* and *inadequacies*. Racism seeks domination by forcing others into subserviency or even annihilation.

Racism is also an expression of sin. As an expression of sin, racism not only looks upon people of other races with hostility, it actually expresses evil intent for them through human conduct. Whereas racial self identification affirms persons, racism negates the true identity of other persons.

Racism is expressed in many forms. The forms include, but are not limited to, *ethnic imperialism, systemic racism*, and *philosophical racism*. Not all these forms are easily or equally recognizable as expressions of racism. But all of them have one thing in common: a tendency to subjectively suppress the worthiness of other people by forcibly subjecting them to domination and degradation. These forms of racist expressions are, by no means an exhaustive listing, but, an honest attempt to offer some helpful insights into the nature of racism from a theological perspective.

Ethnic Imperialism

Ethnic imperialism happens when any ethnic group lays exclusive claims to universality by elevating its own world view as the only credible world view possible. In order to sustain this behavior, the ethnic group, quite often, has to resist any other view of the world, whether or not that view offers a better insight into the nature of truth.

Some of the early Christian missionaries to Africa imposed the idea that in order to be baptized into the Body of Christ, every African person needed to rid himself or herself of "pagan" names and take upon "Christian" names as

marks of a new identity in Christ. At baptism, the minister would ask, "What Christian name do you give this person?" The required response was to shout aloud a European name instead of an African name. Consequently, many African Christians today carry European names from the day of their baptism.

Ultimately, ethnic imperialism breeds distrust, and distrust destroys community. It is difficult to know what to believe when one discovers that the so-called "Christian" names at baptism are only names from other people's cultures and are as "pagan" as any other names. The credibility and effectiveness of our faith, witness, and service hinges upon whether we believe and do the will of God.

Systemic Racism

Systemic racism is an elusive form of racism because it is rooted in systems that facilitate and govern human society. When native people in this country are compelled by the requirements of our social, economic, and legal systems to live on reservations or in urban human filing cabinets (welfare housing) in the inner cities, systemic racism is at work. Elusive and silent, it is a potent force.

When the social, political, economic, legal, and religious systems treat people based primarily on their race, systemic racism is at work. Systemic racism is invisible, but causes certain people to be hired last and fired first. It is that kind of racism that, being a minority in this society, you feel and experience but cannot always prove in a court of law.

Philosophical Racism

Philosophical racism, much like systemic racism, is a system. It is a system of ideas, principles, assumptions, concepts, schools of thought, presumptions, and conclusions (usually upheld by historical misinformation) that has as its primary goal the subjugation of people of other races and cultures, and the elevation of ones own. Philosophical racism creates and preserves racial stereotypes, ascribes negative attributes, and places arbitrary limits on the employment of the abilities of people of various races and cultures.

Racism, in whatever form, stands at odds with God's community of inclusiveness, grace, compassion, and love. Racism hurts both the perpetrator and the victim. Racism enslaves its perpetrator to guilt, hate and fear of retribution, and enslaves its victim to dehumanization and anger.

Racism is sin and abuses power and authority. The desire to control others stands at the foundation of racism. Without power, racism is reduced to hateful prejudice. Racial prejudice is a latent form of racism which awaits the resources of power in order to gain expression. Thus, prejudice must be addressed.

Power is the driving engine of racism. Power is the single most potent weapon of racism. Without power, racism is ineffective. The Church must seek justice in the uses of power within society if the menace of racism is to be overcome. The Church must empower and educate the powerless in such a way that they do not, in turn, imitate the oppressor.

Prejudice and discrimination based on race become racism when they are enforced by power, authority, and control. Pastors exercise power and authority in various ways within the Church. When power and authority are allowed to be exercised by pastors of various races and cultures in racially diverse congregations across the conferences, a new paradigm of understanding and appreciation for our common heritage as persons and, I believe, our common destiny as Christians will emerge. New levels and standards of trust, friendship, and fellowship among people will be established. New expectations for our

earthly pilgrimage will emerge. New depths of compassion and love will be experienced.

Consequently, the Church has both an opportunity to seize and a challenge to fulfill. To be the Body of Christ in the world, the Church must *re-present*[35] Christ and become the embodiment of God's inclusive community of salvation. Through the Church, persons of various races and cultures can learn how to live in justice, peace, and love together. Through the Church, the vilest offender can come to experience the joys of salvation in Christ. Through the Church, barriers of exclusion can be broken down and divided people healed.

ECCLESIOLOGY AND THE ITINERANT SYSTEM

The Church is called to offer the world God's kingdom of justice and righteousness, where people "let justice roll down like waters and righteousness like an everflowing stream".[36] The world is desperately seeking this alternative because no one desires to be subjected to dehumanization.

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[35]See glossary for definition of "re-present".

[36]Amos 5:24

A racially divided people's hope for healing lies in the healing power of God. The Church is where human healing occurs. The Church is a hospital for sinners and not a barracks for saints. The Church consists of faulty people who confess to their sins, seek forgiveness and healing, and seek empowerment over sin. The nature of the Church's faith compels it to put its faith into action. Racially polarized segments of our society must not be allowed to find friends within the chambers of the Church. The Church is a means of divine healing in the world. If the means of divine healing is allowed to be clogged with the same *dis-ease* which needs healing, how will healing come?

The Michigan Area of The United Methodist Church is called to be a *re-presentation* of the community of God. Our Savior Jesus Christ died in disgrace in order that we might live in his grace. No matter how deeply the seeds of racism are sown, no matter how vulnerable it makes us in tackling the problem of racism through effective cross racial and cross cultural appointments, the Michigan Area must be about the task of faithful discipleship, developing and spreading effective cross racial and cross cultural ministries among the people of Michigan.

Till Christ comes in final victory, the conferences may have to contend with deeply-rooted racial problems. Ours is a responsibility, not necessarily to be successful, but, always to be faithful to the will of God. Is it God's will that believers share their faith with all people? Yes! The Church is commissioned to "make disciples of all nations".[37]

Michigan is a microcosm of the nations of the world as its people come from far and near. The Church has a great privilege to "make disciples of all nations" right here in this state. What a glorious opportunity and challenge!

THE PRIESTHOOD OF ALL BELIEVERS

The Church is a community of believers, a community of faith, and an *ecumenical convocation*[38] by *divine invocation*[39]. The Church has been assembled by divine invocation and exists always by the grace of God. Its members, the believers, having confessed their sin,

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[37]Matthew 28:19

[38]See glossary for definition of "ecumenical convocation".

[39]See glossary for definition of "divine invocation".

repented, and accepted God's gracious gift of new life in Jesus Christ, are on a mission to glorify God on earth as God is glorified in heaven.

Whereas, historically speaking, the priesthood of all believers relates to each person's direct access through Christ to God, it is primarily concerned with central the belief that each member shares the overall responsibility of the whole Church, including disciple-making.

Each believer is an *ambassador*[40]. Priesthood in Christ affirms this and challenges the believer to build the Body of Christ with people of all races, ages, cultures, and tribes. This basic responsibility rests upon all believers, not only the religious professionals (pastors and *diaconal ministers)* of the Church.

The task of encouraging, nurturing, and celebrating cross-racial and cross-cultural appointments and ministries in the Michigan Area is an every-member task. The specific roles of the Bishop and Cabinet in appointment making is only a part (though critical) of the whole process that leads to the appointment. Congregational involvement in the appointment process and in the ministries that grow out of cross racial and cross cultural appointments flows out of a

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[40]See glossary for definition.

deep understanding and application of our priestly duties of making disciples of all nations. Disciple-making is a priestly function because it involves the whole process of nurture and healing of the human soul. This process creates a new paradigm for the one who was once lost. It reveals a new reality within which the will of God is perceived as imperative rather than optional.

Accepting cross racial and cross cultural diversity as a gift of God to the Church depends on how seriously and how faithfully believers take their responsibility to accept, affirm, nurture, and proclaim the diversity with which God blesses the Church. The priesthood of all believers means that faithful believers still recognize God to be the final source of human conversion and salvation. Believers are means by which the "good news" of salvation in Christ is proclaimed. God, as the source and essence of "good news", produces our faith and guarantees our final victory over sin.

CONCLUSION

The nightmare of racism in Michigan can be improved when pastors are appointed across racial and cultural lines, in order to nurture persons in love and respect for people

of all races and cultures. Our God beckons us to the throne of grace as one, undivided people. We have the capacity within us faithfully to heed the call of God over the calls of the world, and to offer ourselves to this cause.

Cross racial and cross cultural appointments are key elements in the process of establishing racial and cultural inclusiveness throughout the Michigan Area. Effective cross racial and cross cultural appointments require racial maturity and cultural competency[41].

The Michigan Area needs effective cross racial and cross cultural appointments. May the 1969 rallying cry of Liberian United Methodist Bishop Steven Trowen Nagbe remind us that, "Only a united Church can truly meet the challenge of secularism. Only a Church whose unity is clear for all to see can effectively reveal the unity of God."[42]

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[41]See glossary for definition of the concept of "cultural competency".

[42]Bishop S. Trowen Nagbe, An address to the Liberia Central Conference of 1969 The Circuit Rider, (Monrovia: Christian Education Department, First Quarter 1970).

CHAPTER THREE

GOALS AND METHODOLOGICAL ASSUMPTIONS

The United Methodist itinerant system has its origins deeply rooted in the Methodist movement formed by The Reverend John Wesley in the early eighteenth century. Itineracy, in the Methodist tradition, began as a method of ministering to persons who needed salvation. Wesley's sense of mission, nurtured by his own spiritual growth, led him to a great urging to preach the Gospel to all who would listen. Out of this passion and motivation the first Methodist society was organized in London in 1739.[43]

The organization of Methodist societies in Britain was never a preconceived design, but the result of the missionary and evangelistic preaching of John Wesley and his fellow preachers. With huge increases in the number of converts, the itinerant form of ministry emerged. In direct response to the results of this kind of missionary and evangelistic outreach, the shape and form of Methodist polity, which includes itineracy, developed.

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[43]Rupert Davies and Gordon Rupp, A History of the Methodist Church in Great Britain, (London: Epworth Press, 1965), 1:52.

The development of the itineracy in early Methodism followed the pattern of Wesley's theological discernment; namely, that theology must flow out of human experience and encounter with God, and not merely from some preconceived idealistic framework. Wesleyan theology is that which is done primarily out of practical experience, flowing out of active engagement in human reality.

Early American Methodism contended with similar realities as did British Methodism in Wesley's time. New settlements were being established regularly in expanded territories along the Chesapeake in the upper South. As the colonies spread westward, so did the need to evangelize and nurture the new residents. There were few preachers and the flocks were numerous and widespread. In these contexts, itineracy came to be an effective way to serve widespread settlements with few preachers in the midst of religious and cultural diversity.

Wesley employed laypersons to assist him in preaching to converts within the numerous societies. His appointment of *helpers* to assist preachers in travelling the circuit and to "feed and guide the flock" became expectations of itineracy. Since the preachers could not be everywhere at once, and in order not to neglect the needs of the flock, *helpers* were appointed to assist with the duties.

Through the years the itinerant system of appointment has taken on a permanent place in the polity of The United Methodist Church. Every policy, practice, or way of life has its own assumptions, based on what is deemed necessary and appropriate. Donald E. Messer, the renowned United Methodist theologian and academician, succinctly offers six assumptions that compose the bedrock of United Methodist itineracy.[44]

1. That congregations do not have the right to choose their own clergy.
2. That ordained clergy have no right to choose their own fields of labor.
3. That the appointment be made by a competent, impartial, untrammeled authority (the bishop), whose powers and duties must be outlined carefully and ordered by the whole church.
4. That the whole Church must covenant to be in itinerant ministry together.
5. That every preacher must have a pulpit and every cleric a congregation.
6. That there is an equality of opportunity for every itinerant to serve in any place.

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[44]Donald E. Messer, SEND ME? The Itineracy in Crisis, (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1991), 162-172.

These assumptions create certain expectations among the laity about clergy career and ministry. These expectations, whatever they may be, help shape the process which leads to the appointment, reception, and service of the clergy in the local congregation. These expectations often lead to anxieties about how long the current pastor will be here and who would be the next pastor. In congregations that have members from various races and cultures, there may be uneasiness either from the majority or the minority racial members as to whether they may soon have a pastor who is neither familiar with a their culture nor is a part of a their race. All these assumptions, expectations, and anxieties form the dynamic of the itineracy.

Cross racial and cross cultural appointments in the American Methodist tradition date back to the foundations of the Methodist Episcopal Church itself. Caucasian and Black pastors served in cross racial and cross cultural appointments across the South, even during the period of slavery. Since cross racial appointments primarily involved Caucasian pastors and non Caucasian congregations, slaves and native people were more frequently on the receiving end of these appointments.

Not until all pastors, regardless of race and culture, were considered appointable to any Church did

cross racial and cross cultural appointments become a major political issue in open itineracy. In order to fully understand the impact cross racial and cross cultural appointments have on pastors, congregations, ministry, and the nature of ecclesiology in the Michigan Area of The United Methodist Church, we must look critically at the six assumptions of the itineracy.

Congregations Do Not Have A Right To Choose Their Pastor

In the appointment process, a guiding principle is that congregations, whether small or large, do not have veto power over the Bishop and Cabinet. They may tell the Bishop and Cabinet whom they prefer to have as their pastor if they so desire, but the final decision is made by the Bishop who must consider all the needs, circumstances, and realities of the situation before appointing a pastor.

However, the congregation has *bargaining leverage*[45]. This leverage allows the congregation, through its *Pastor Parish Relations Committee*[46], to define the congregation's needs in ways that heavily influence (or determine) the kind of pastor to be appointed. This is what often happens when

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[45]See glossary for definition.

[46]See glossary for definition.

a pastoral change is about to be made. This leverage virtually allows larger Churches to choose who may serve as their pastors. Since most large United Methodist Churches are White and have not had non-White pastors before, one danger is the emergence and persistence of racially motivated appointments.

In any case, a congregation may have strong racial prejudice and preference that will be somehow expressed in the process.

Ordainded Clergy Have No Right To Choose

Though pastors are very much a part of the process in which their appointments happen, no pastor has a right to choose the Church to which he or she must be appointed. The pastor's family situation and evidence of gifts of grace are considered in every appointment. The appointment is then left to the Bishop and Cabinet to make. This places pressure on the Bishop and the Cabinets to make impartial and effective appointments.

A Competent And Impartial Authority

When neither congregation nor pastor has a right to choose their appointment, it becomes imperative that the appointing authority be competent (racially, culturally, pastorally, theologically, intellectually, experientially, and spiritually) in exercising this authority. Racists, egotists, culturalists, sexists and fundamentalists need not hold the office of Bishop in the first place. When they do, the entire appointive process loses credibility and collapses, leading to connectional distrust, indifference, and schisms.

The Church Must Covenant To Be In Itinerant Ministry

Since neither the congregation nor pastor makes the final choice, and since the appointing authority (the Bishop) must be impartial, competent, and untrammeled, the logical and necessary expectation is that the whole church, in some acceptable way, must covenant to be in itinerant ministry together. This means that congregations, pastors, and Bishops must learn to accept and live with the joys and the pains of itineracy. This also means that people must see their differences in the light of the grace of God and of the welfare of the entire Church.

Another implication is that the whole church must establish an appointment process reflective of the Church's image of the Kingdom of God. This process must be inclusive and spiritually appropriate to the needs of the world and the goals of the Church.

Every Preacher Must Have A Pulpit

To guarantee every preacher a pulpit and cleric a congregation is a delicate matter. It implies that every preacher will be competent and prepared to serve in a pulpit. It means that a conference must have the right to deny incompetent preachers the license and/or privilege of membership. Else, the possibility exists for incompetent preachers to be appointed to congregations.

Furthermore, the more incompetent preachers/clerics there are in the conference, the more congregations will desire to choose who they will have as pastors. In case a Black or White membership congregation is about to have a new pastor, and that congregation knows that a racist pastor might be appointed to serve them, that congregation may desire or demand a choice. This desire or demand is caused either by a distrust of the system or by a need to control the system. Either way, the system is threatened by distrust and abusive control.

Equality Of Opportunity For Every Itinerant To Serve

This assumption is a basis for this project in the sense that, if itineracy is to be truly open, it has to offer equal appointment opportunity to all appointable pastors across the conference. This means pastors should be appointed to serve congregations regardless of race, culture, or ethnicity. This also means that the conference should have a process by which pastors are selected to ensure that they are competent to fulfill the demands, requirements and expectations of the itineracy.

Open itineracy requires more than single *ethnic-specific* training only. Many pastors are trained mainly for appointments to congregations within their race and/or culture. Pastors must be culturally competent to serve effectively the people of the culture to which they are appointed. Pastors must be competent to serve effectively within a given racial context of appointment. Broad cultural competence and racial maturity are necessary for open itineracy. Limited cultural and\or racial competency limits the appointability of a pastor to limited cultural and/or racial contexts. There is need for training and experience in multiculturalism and history for all pastors, if open itineracy will ever become a reality.

Itineracy In A Multiracial Situation

Itineracy allows the conference to utilize the services and leadership of ordained pastors where they are most needed. This allows congregations and communities to experience pastoral care as a process. The itineracy also allows the conference flexibility to make required pastoral leadership changes and adjustments where these changes and adjustments are needed. As congregational and community circumstances change, pastoral and ministry focuses must also change, if the church is to remain relevant and effective in all aspects of it ministry.

This is especially true in the case of the Michigan Area because, since the 1950s, significant changes have occurred in Michigan. Changes in demographics, population composition, race relations, equal opportunity, affirmative action, education, housing, and social values have contributed to paradigmatic shifts in society. There are increasingly high numbers of non-White ethnics living in the cities. The once exclusively White suburbs now have African American, Asian, Hispanic, and other ethnic residents. The school systems, with varying concentrations of ethnics, are becoming increasingly multiracial in enrollment. Places of work and worship are becoming increasingly multiracial as people converge upon them, bringing their various cultures

with them. The need for increasing cross racial and cross cultural appointments and ministries is not based on idealism, but on the harsh realities of our time. We live in an increasingly multiracial and multicultural society. Our task, if the Church is to remain relevant and effective, is to respond to the reality of what is happening around us, and make the necessary *paradigmatic shifts*[47] in how we do ministry and how we deploy pastors.

Relevant and effective ministry requires relevant and effective methods and substance. People have to understand the meaning, purpose, relevance, and goal of Christianity. To do this, they need pastors who are culturally competent and racially mature. A culturally competent pastor is a pastor who understands the language, traditions, history, experience, and hopes of the people among whom she or he serves. A culturally competent pastor does not have to belong to the same race as her or his congregation, but must share in the rich experiences they share and affirm them from both a cultural and spiritual standpoint.

Racial maturity is appreciation for self-identity and in human diversity. It is significant in all cases of ministry, whether or not the pastor serves his or her own

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[47]See glossary for definition.

race. Racial maturity enables and frees the pastor from the shackles of restrictive and prejudicial theologies and practices of ministry. Racial maturity is a component of spiritual maturity. To become spiritually mature, one has to overcome existential ideas and practices, such as racism, that are not in accordance to the will of God. Racial maturity helps people to know and appreciate who they are. This knowledge is a basis for knowing and appreciating the identities of other human beings. Any person who has not known and appreciated himself or herself cannot freely know and appreciate other people.

A major part of our task in the Michigan Area is to affirm the need for culturally competent and racially mature pastors. We cannot be effective in the emerging multiracial and multicultural communities we serve by being satisfied with the way things are. Neither can we resign ministry to whatever forms and norms are dictated by the secular world. God's Kingdom is an inclusive kingdom, the kind of kingdom which the Church represents and anticipates here on earth.

Power, Control, and Authority

In order for the Michigan Area to make the necessary paradigmatic shifts in how cross racial and cross cultural appointments are made, certain major issues must be addressed: specifically power, control[48] and authority. These issues can be obstacles to or facilitators of changes in the way we do things.

Power plays a major role in the establishment of any paradigm. The present system of pastoral appointments, even in cross racial and cross cultural contexts, is based on certain power structures and relationships that may be resistant to change. For example, the paradigmatic assumption that whenever a White pastor and a non White pastor are appointed to the same charge, the White pastor must be appointed the senior pastor and the non White pastor as Associate Pastor must be challenged. It must be challenged because it erroneously suggests that White pastors are better leaders or pastors than non-White pastors. This issue is critical for the whole Church.

Not only are pastors to be appointed on the basis of skill, experience, and evidence of God's grace, they must

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[48]See glossary for definition.

also be appointed on the basis of their equality with their peers. If the Church will be inclusive, it must move away from tokenism to intentionality in power sharing and exercise of responsibility.

Multiracial ministries empower people of all races and allow them to share power. The traditional power base in transitional inner city churches, is White. In the event of shifts in ministry focus, style, and leadership, it would be important to nurture equivalent shifts in power base and power relations too. Else, the new leadership may be hindered by lay power brokers who may have no commitment or loyalty to the entire process of building inclusiveness. This should not be allowed to happen, either by design or by default.

Control is another issue that must be addressed in this process of paradigmatic and systemic shifts. Who will exercise control in a new situation is as critical as whether a new situation will happen at all. The integrity of paradigmatic shifts rests upon many factors, and one of these is shifts in control. Multiracial and multicultural ministries require a collaborative and flexible control system which responds to different forms of evangelization, worship, preaching, organization, and planning in appropriate ways. If control remains in the hands of

persons who know and appreciate no other ways of doing ministry and being the Church, the entire process is jeopardized.

Our history shows that there is no significant difference between liberal and conservative controllers when it comes to the issue of control. The main difference between the two is that conservative Whites want to control a white institution and liberal Whites want to control a colorful institution. Old systems of control, usually in the exclusive hands of the majority race, must be broken in order to allow for a shared system of control which affirms, enables, and empowers racial and cultural relevance and diversity in ministry.

Authority is another issue which must be addressed in this new paradigm. When authentic expressions of faith in worship, whether they are by shouting, dancing, clapping, or speaking in tongues during worship times, are disdained or repudiated by the authority of persons of one race against people of other races and cultures, it becomes difficult, if not impossible, to foster multiracial and multicultural ministries. Authority ought not be used to dislodge some styles of faith expression in favor of others.

Cultural Competence And Racial Maturity

An important issue in cross racial and cross cultural appointments is competency from a cultural standpoint. This issue stands at the intersection between single race and multiracial ministry and between single culture and multi-cultural ministry. Jesus was culturally competent in leading the Jewish people. He used their history, language, customs, traditions, beliefs, and aspirations to convey messages and to do his ministry. He made ministry to deal directly with the realities of the people. He helped his people to look beyond their shortcomings to the glory of God. Jesus was culturally competent because he was sensitive and responsive to the needs of people of other cultures, races, and tribes (such as the Romans, Samaritans, and Greeks).

Cultural competency does not mean membership in any one particular culture. It involves understanding and appreciation for the experiences, prejudices, anxieties, hopes, expectations, world views, belief systems, customs, practices, history, and languages of other people. Cultural competency extends, not only to an understanding, but also, to a affirming (experience) the best aspects of the cultural

components of people's lives. Only when the pastor shares in the lives and experiences of the people can she or he truly become their authentic leader.

This is also true about racial maturity. When a Black pastor will be appointed to serve a White congregation, or a White pastor to serve a Hispanic congregation, that pastor needs to have cultural competency and racial maturity in order to be effective. Racial maturity is not a form of ethnic cleansing, whereby one must look a certain way or pretend to be what she or he is not. Racial maturity involves racial understanding, racial sensitivity, racial inclusiveness, and the ability to identify, in depth, with more than one racial group. This is what Paul means when he says,

> "For though I be free from all men, yet have I made myself servant unto all, that I might gain the more. And unto the Jews I became as a Jew, that I might gain the Jews; to them that are under the law, as under the law, that I might gain them that are under the law; to them that are without the law, as without law, (being not without law to God, but under the law to Christ,) that I might gain them that are without law. To the weak became I as weak, that I might gain the weak: I am made all things to all men, that I might by all means save some."[49]

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[49]1 Corinthians 9:19-22

Racial understanding involves sharing in a view that affirms the worth and rights of people of other races. Racial sensitivity is having a firm commitment to the concerns and needs of people of other races. Racial inclusiveness involves being willing, ready, and always committed to supporting the involvement and leadership of people of all races in the ministries of the Church. Racial self identification[50] is being aware and affirmative of who you are racially and, as a result, being affirmative of the racial identities of others.

Whenever a pastor refuses to identify with the people, she or he forfeits the blessings of effective leadership. People will not be led by one who is an alien. Consequently, cross racial and cross cultural appointments must take seriously the requirements of cultural competency and racial maturity as important criteria for ministry.

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[50]See glossary for definition of "racial identification".

Open Itineracy

Itineracy is open when it allows pastors to move around ever so often, and prevents the establishment of non-itinerant enclaves within the conference. These enclaves usually convey the message that, if you do certain things in time, you would not have to move. It also implies that the itineracy is binding on all pastors and churches. It is not open when it arbitrarily or automatically precludes some of its own pastors from eligibility for certain appointments.

However, open itineracy does not start with the appointment of pastors. It begins with the training and nurturing of pastors in their childhood and adult years. It continues as the pastor is being prepared in college and seminary. When pastors are nurtured and trained with ideas and prejudices that are exclusivist and inhospitable to inclusiveness and multiethnic ministries, it becomes difficult to expect that the Bishop and Cabinet will fix the problem in the appointment process. The Cabinet and Bishop do not have magical powers. They can only work with pastors who have been approved for appointment.

Therefore, seriousness about open itineracy requires a proactive engagement with the nurture process and with seminary curricula that influence the theologies, teachings and dispositions of our pastors. The more culturally and racially competent pastors we have available, the more open our itineracy will be. If all White pastors are only trained and nurtured to pastor White folk, the Bishop and Cabinet will have problems trying to appoint such pastors to Black, Hispanic, or Asian churches. The same would be true of any other ethnic pastors. A basic task of the Church is to develop more racially and culturally competent pastors for the appointment process. This would expand the options and broaden the choices.

Multicultural and Multiracial Ministries

Cross racial and cross cultural appointment in the Michigan Area presently have limited connotations. It usually means appointment of Black, Hispanic, or Asian pastors to predominantly White congregations. Most of these appointments are to *transitional city churches*[51].

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[51]See glossary for definition of "transtional city churches".

Transitional city churches are those churches that are historically White in membership. Due to demograhpic shifts in these communities, the Church is experiencing increasing populations of diverse ethnic people. Many transitional churches look upon cross racial and cross cultural appointments as necessary for continued survival and usually assume the eventual change of the congregation from one race or culture to another.

Transitional city churches operate out of a survival mentality as they maintain the status quo. They long for the glory days of the fifties, when membership and program soared. While they know that this will not happen, their commitment is to its possibility. These nostalgic sentiments are rooted in older members who are now in their seventies, eighties, and nineties and have little optimism about the future.

These persons are the "Rip Van Winkles" of the 1990s who have either fallen into a deep sleep or have awakened to a new reality in which they are not prepared to respond effectively. They yearn for some real help from anyone who loves and cares for them. They need pastors who are versatile as well as sensitive to their circumstances and predicaments. Theirs is not necessarily a rejection of the

need effectively to proclaim the gospel of Jesus Christ in a new age, but an inadequacy or a lack of cultural, racial, and generational competency to do so. Pastors who relate effectively to these persons soon come to discover that beneath the seemingly hostile and resistant behaviors is a deep yearning for relevancy to the situation and faithfulness to the gospel.

Whether or not they are able or prepared to make the necessary personal adjustments to these paradigmatic and systemic shifts is quite another issue. Effective cross racial and cross cultural appointments must be prepared to deal with the needs of transitional city churches and their loyal members.

Another connotation of cross racial and cross cultural appointment in the Michigan Area involves the deployment of non-White ethnic pastors to all White membership churches, usually as associate pastors and, sometimes, as pastor. This aspect of cross racial and cross cultural appointments is probably the most controversial. The controversy stems from arguments that such appointments have no practical chance of ever leading to multiracial and/or multicultural ministries, especially when the churches in question are located in racially and/or

culturally exclusive communities. The exclusiveness of such communities may suggest to critics that members of those churches are either exclusivist in their beliefs and practices or, at least, indifferent to the issues of inclusiveness.

Consequently, whether the appointment is to a transitional city church or to an all-White suburban church, the major issues that emerge from the debate about cross racial and cross cultural appointments are questions about purpose, goals, and ministries. Is the purpose simply to supply the congregation with a pastor who is willing to serve it, to provide a token leader for purposes of impression, or to make intentional shifts in relationships, understandings of ministry, and composition and direction of ministry? Is the goal to strengthen whatever present form and type of ministry that is happening, or to bring about programmatic shifts in methods of doing ministry that correspond to paradigmatic shifts in society?

Are cross racial and cross cultural appointments made out of desperation or opportunity? Are they caused by default or by design?

The writer, in speaking with a Black pastor who is serving a White congregation, discovered that cross racial and cross cultural appointments can be made a bit prematurely. This Black pastor spoke of the hospitality of the members and the relative smoothness of the transition into the life and ministry of the church. The Black pastor even commended the Cabinet for its responsiveness. The Black pastor had requested a cross racial and cross cultural appointment. Having been given the opportunity, the Black pastor later observed, "I wanted a cross racial appointment but I didn't think it would be this crossed!"

This observation reveals an ambiguity in meaning and expectation. The Black pastor understood cross racial and cross cultural appointment to mean appointment to multiracial and multicultural churches, where there were already in place the foundations for multiracial and multicultural ministries. It was not expected that the appointment would be to an all-White church in an all White community, where opportunities for building inclusiveness are almost nonexistent. It may be that the Cabinet understood differently. Whatever the facts are, this experience exposes the need for clarity of purpose, goals, and ministry expectations around cross racial and cross cultural appointments.

The church must view cross racial and cross cultural appointment not as an end in itself, but as a means to a greater end, namely, the building of inclusiveness within the life and ministries of the church.

Support Systems

The goal of nurturing inclusiveness through cross racial and cross cultural appointments cannot be achieved by good intentions alone. Deep divisions caused by hostile histories, cultures, experiences, traditions, and practices persist to this day. The transition from this polarization to inclusiveness will, by necessity, be turbulent. Evidences of this turbulence are seen in short-term cross racial and cross cultural appointments, conflict between pastors and congregations, differences over priorities in ministry, disputes over leadership and worship styles, and lack of meaningful progress in building inclusiveness within the leadership and program structures of our congregations.

Since difficulties are often to be expected with change, it is necessary to plan for these difficulties. Support systems are a necessity for congregations and

pastors in cross racial and cross cultural appointments.

Support for the pastor must involve the pastor's family (where applicable). The pastor cannot be effectively supported without her or his family being included. Current pastoral support systems are inadequate in meeting the needs of the pastor and his or her family. It is not practical to expect that a pastor will honestly tell members of the congregation (on the support committee) that she or he does not like them, their behaviors, or their prejudices. This problem is not unique to cross racial and cross cultural appointments.

It will be helpful that the pastoral support system extend beyond the congregation to involve the district and/or conference. This way, the pastor and her or his family can honestly share their frustrations and joys without the risk of immediate negative repercussions within the congregation.

Pastors in cross racial and cross cultural appointments face a lot of conflicting situations. These situations are unconventional. They require pastoral leadership where the cross racial or cross cultural pastor's leadership style may not conform to the expectations of the

people. Often, what we consider to have been an ineffective cross racial or cross cultural appointment may very well be the result either of an ineffective or a nonexistent support system for the pastor and family.

Congregational support systems must extend beyond the pastor. It is unrealistic to expect that a congregation having serious problems with its cross racial and/or cross cultural pastor will always choose to speak to the pastor about their concerns. Effective congregational support systems allow the congregation, in cases where necessary, to access outside help. Effective congregational support systems also enable the pastor to become involved at appropriate times in the process. Well defined and established support systems are necessary. They are central components of all effective cross racial and cross cultural appointments.

CHAPTER FOUR

THE PROJECT

PROJECT COMPONENTS

This model is designed to assist persons who are interested in training congregations, pastors and district superintendents[52] (or designated denominational leaders) in the techniques of effective cross racial and cross cultural appointments. The design is structural and programmatic.[53]

The model can be used to produce a manual or handbook on cross racial and cross cultural appointments[54] for use in local churches (see appendix for details).

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[52]See glossary for definition of "district superintendent" in the United Methodist tradition.

[53]The design presented in this dissertation is a replicable version of the actual workshop. For details on the actual methods used, see pages 97-109 in the appendix.

[54]See appendix for handbook developed in the Michigan Area.

PROJECT OBJECTIVE AND GOAL

Always make sure you set out with clear objectives and goals for your project. A typical objective for training is to improve the process of making cross racial and cross cultural appointments. Many cross racial and cross cultural appointments need to be made in an intentional, meaningful, and mission driven way. Without clarity of intention, meaning, and mission, cross racial and cross cultural appointments may lead to more frustration and disappointment than is desirable.

Furthermore, the project must have a clearly identified goal. A goal is a desired outcome. Make sure you can clearly identify the desired outcome you seek. A typical goal of cross racial and cross cultural appointments is a more inclusive Church. An inclusive Church is one which embraces all people and affirms their traditions and their common faith in Jesus Christ. Another goal might be the creation of awareness and racial sensitivity among people. Once the goal is clearly identified, planning may proceed. Planning is necessary to achieve the goal and fulfill the objective.

Cross racial and cross cultural appointments are not ends in themselves. They are means to an end. Cross racial and cross cultural appointments are tools that may be employed to nurture congregations from racial and cultural exclusiveness to racial and cultural inclusiveness. How this happens is a focus of the methodologies employed.

GOALS FOR PERSONAL GROWTH

The following goals for personal growth are offered as models for persons preparing to lead a cross racial and cross cultural appointment workshop.

Make sure to design an experiential learning goal for yourself. Set specific timelines for achieving each of your personal goals. These personal goals must include, but not necessarily be limited to:

1. developing increased sensitivity to racial and cultural traditions and contributions to ministry.
2. awareness of issues that are relevant to and necessary for effective and faithful multiracial and multicultural ministries.

3. deepening and focusing awareness and understanding of the theological foundations of cross racial and cross cultural ministry.
4. developing the tools for determining what issues are relevant and critical.
5. designing opportunities for cross racial and cross cultural cooperation and exchange.
6. discovering the correlation between multiracial/ multicultural ministries and inclusiveness in a pluralistic society.
7. using project design to teach groups, workshops, and classes in multicultural ministry.

PROCESS FOR ACCOMPLISHING PERSONAL GOALS

Discussions with Bishop and Cabinet

It is not enough to set personal goals unless they are accomplished. Consequently, a process must be set up to accomplish these goals. Training for cross racial and cross cultural appointments must involve more than one person. In order for this to happen, others with authority and influence within the Church must be supportive. In order to

ascertain Church-wide support, meetings should be held with the Bishop and the district superintendents who will make the appointments. In congregational settings, these meetings must involve those with the power and authority to get the appointments made.

The purpose of these meetings is to secure consensus among the leadership and to improve the process for cross racial and cross cultural appointment-making. The goal is to secure their support, define the scope and need for the project, and establish an understanding of which congregations should be initiatially involved. In cases where there is no clearly defined process, the production of a handbook[55] on cross racial and cross cultural appointments provides much needed assistance.

The development of consensus may involve tools that gather relevant data about the leadership's current understanding and expectations of cross racial and cross cultural appointment. To facilitate this process, surveys[56] may be developed and distributed among the leadership to identify key issues and expectations. The results of these

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[55]See appendix for a copy of the handbook developed for use in the Michigan Area of The United Methodist Church.

[56]See appendix for copies of surveys used in this project.

surveys are helpful in the personal and professional growth of the project designers. These results may also help in the development of the program and content of the Workshop on Cross Racial and Cross Cultural Appointments.

Meetings with Project Consultants

Project consultants[57] are persons with expertise in the cross racial and cross cultural appointments. These persons are helpful throughout the process of planning and implementing the workshop. They must be involved in several formal and informal meetings, conversations, and other contacts during the project period. Some of the consultants must serve as members of the Workshop Planning Committee and must be involved throughout the entire process. The consultants must have professional experience in cabinet, programming, and/or cross racial and cross cultural matters within the Church.

Consultants review issues, ideas, and project components; ask critical questions; and offer alternatives, referrals, and guidance throughout the entire project.

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[57]See appendix for listing of Project consultants for this project.

Workshop Planning

The Workshop must be designed for a specific target population. The Planning Committee must consist of persons (including key leadership) from all churches concerned. The Committee should have a chairperson, secretary, and registrar. The chairperson convenes all meetings and makes all official contacts on behalf of the committee. The secretary takes records of meetings and plans, writes and coordinates letters and invitations, and keeps all committee members informed about the key issues evolved within the process. The registrar publicizes the workshop, recruits and registers participants for the workshop. Committee members or contextual associates[58] design and evaluate the workshop, recruit workshop leaders, organize and manage a budget, arrange housing, food, and supplies for the workshop.

Through the process of designing, presenting, and approving the evaluation tools for the workshop, under-staning is deepened and focus for the project is sharpened.

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[58]See glossary for definition of "contextual associates".

Workshop Implementation and Survey

The experience of implementing and evaluating the workshop is enlightening because it affords the designers opportunities for meeting, conferring, and sharing with a broad group of persons concerned with cross racial and cross cultural appointments throughout the Church, conference, and/or denomination. It also exposes the designers to concepts and practices at work in other places.

Pre test, post test, and evaluation forms can help planners to assess the necessity for the workshop, and understand the extent to which participants need training for the task of cross racial and cross cultural ministry.

Workshop Evaluation

The Planning Committee must meet to analyze the participants' evaluation, evaluate the overall workshop process, and make recommendations for future improvements. Recommendations do help to improve processes and effectiveness. Evaluations can deepen understanding and build appreciation for the value of cross racial and cross cultural appointments within the Church.

Continuing Education and Retraining

Continuing education and retraining opportunities offer a tremendous resource for anyone leading a cross racial and cross cultural appointment workshop. Since there is so little writing available on this subject, continuing education and retraining are necessary to help prepare leaders for the task of helping others learn special skills, methods, and philosophies of cross racial and cross cultural appointments.

Work Environment and Personal Experience

The work environment and personal experience also provide opportunities for personal growth. Those who train others in cross racial and cross cultural appointments must themselves have previous (and on going) experience in the area. It is not recommended that leaders rely solely on idealistic knowledge when training practitioners. Instead, leaders must find every possible opportunity for personal growth through professional and personal life.

GOALS FOR CONFERENCES

Goals must be clearly set for the congregation, conference or judicatory, and/or denomination which is to implement cross racial and cross cultural appointment. These goals must be undergirded by the constitution, by-laws, or rules of the church. The impact and importance of cross racial and cross cultural appointment is so significant that it must never be undertaken without the proper disciplinary or legal support. Cross racial and cross cultural appointment is a responsibility of the whole Church. Consequently, the whole church must be committed to its implementation, if not in practice, at least in principle.

MODEL FOR APPOINTMENT

Improving the process of making effective cross racial and cross cultural appointments requires the following steps.

Cabinet Support

Since appointments are made in the Cabinet, it is imperative that the Cabinet approves the project and spends time establishing goals, objectives, purposes, and defining the nature, scope, and rationale for cross racial and cross cultural appointments.

The Cabinet determines what it wants to do about cross racial and cross cultural appointments within the congregations. Once that is done, the Cabinet needs to restructure itself and its work, wherever necessary, to get the task accomplished. Often, Cabinets get loaded down with bureaucratic chores, causing critical appointments to be made without adequate and comprehensive planning and preparation.

A restructured Cabinet allows time for intentional planning and support of each cross racial and/or cross cultural appointment before, during, and after it is made. Guiding this new structure will be a mission fulfillment philosophy.

All cross racial and cross cultural appointments will be discussed, determined, and made based on criteria sensitive and relevant to the special needs of multiracial and multi-cultural ministry. The outcome is a more task oriented Cabinet and, consequently, a more task oriented cadre of multiracial and multicultural congregations and ministries. In churches where there are no cabinets, this responsibility must be assigned to the appropriate persons.

Cultivating Churches and Pastors

The Cabinet must determine which Churches have the appropriate resources, environment, willingness, commitment, and need for multiracial ministries. The Cabinet must set up forums (including non-Cabinet members) where broad discussions are held about the needs of cross racial and cross cultural appointments. In this forum, it is necessary to include pastors and laity from cultivated churches. This way, the forum is prevented from excessive abstraction and made to focus on pragmatic experiences from the contexts of ministry.

Workshops on Cross Racial and Cross Cultural Appointments

These Workshops must be held every four or five years to:

* explore the issues, opportunities, and strategies for effective appointments and ministries.
* encourage those who are either involved in or desire to become involved in cross racial and cross cultural appointments and/or ministries.
* support cross racial and cross cultural ministries across the conference.
* celebrate the accomplishments of effective cross racial and cross cultural appointments.
* train laity and clergy in racial and cultural competency for ministry.

Support Systems

The Cabinet needs to put into place, support systems for the pastor and family, and for the members of the congregations where cross racial and cross cultural appointments are made. This ensures the presence of conflict avoidance and conflict resolution processes which

may be needed as pastors, their families, congregations, and communities adjust to new paradigms and forms of ministry.

Quite often, the unrealistic expectation has been that the choice of cross racial and/or cross cultural pastoral appointee and congregation are perfect matches, and conflicts are not to be expected. Consequently, when conflicts and other problems emerge, the conclusion is often that the appointment was not viable.

The art of putting support systems in place before making these critical appointments assumes rightly that conflicts and adjustment difficulties are possible in these innovative situations. This is a healthier approach to effective cross racial and cross cultural appointments.

Evaluation

The Cabinet needs to develop a plan for evaluation of all cross racial and cross cultural appointments. Since appointments may change from year to year, no matter whether the changes are to other cross racial and\or cross cultural appointments, each pastor relates differently than previous pastors. This is true even when the succeeding pastors are

of the same race and\or culture. The evaluation helps to improve the situation for every one concerned.

METHODOLOGY

The methodology employed throughout this project is important and involves the following:

1. Choosing the ministry focus
2. Organizing Steps in the Process
3. Establishing Workshop Planning Committee
4. Preparing for the workshop
5. Recruiting Project Consultants
6. Meeting with the Cabinet
7. Developing instruments for the model:
    a. Cabinet Survey
    b. Workshop surveys:
        i. Pre test
        ii. Post test
        iii. Evaluation Forms
    c. Workshop Evaluation by Planning Committee
    d. Recommendations
8. Compiling findings and results of the model
9. Developing conclusions and recommendations

CHOOSING A MINISTRY FOCUS

The choice of a ministry focus is always critical. Make sure that you focus your efforts. Focus will allow for clarity around questions about the nature, purpose, goal, and effectiveness of cross racial and cross cultural appointments in the Michigan Area.

Previous experience in related ministries can and does help in establishing focus. Consultants and contextual associates also help in establishing focus. Most importantly, focus is established by contextual need for the project. If there is need for cross racial and cross cultural appointment, that need will establish the focus. Without need, focus is difficult to establish. Once a focus is established, it's time for the next steps in the process.

ORGANIZING STEPS IN THE PROCESS

After focus is established, the next task is to determine a process, a schedule, a sequential listing of steps and resources needed to implement the project. It is imperitive that the planning committee and consultants commit to this process at this point before the next step.

ESTABLISHING WORKSHOP PLANNING COMMITTEE

A Workshop Planning Committee must be set up by the appropriate leadership within the judicatory to plan and implement the workshop on cross racial and cross cultural appointments. This committee should include key judicatory leaders, pastors, and lay persons from congregations.

The workshop planning committee should organize itself in order to do its work. It is helpful to have a chairperson, a vice chairperson, a secretary, and a registrar. Meetings should be held at a location central and convenient to all committee members, and suitable for this particular kind of planning. Meetings are helpful when they are intentionally scheduled to fulfill tasks.

PREPARING FOR THE WORKSHOP

Once the workshop date, location, and focus are established, publicity should begin immediately. It is helpful to participants, especially when they are spread over large judicatories, that publicity begins a full year before the workshop. Methods of publicity include announcements at church meetings, bulletin inserts, Church

newsletters, and invitation from the bishop (or head of the judicatory).

Leadership should be selected and secured for the various components of the workshop. Brochures should be printed to communicate the content, style, focus, and leadership of the workshop. These brochures may be mailed to all churches concerned and to all persons invited.

Simultaneous with publicity should be the completion of arrangements for lodging (if necessary), meals, and workshop facilities. Registration fees are established when this is necessary to either build ownership or supplement the budget for the workshop.

RECRUITING PROJECT CONSULTANTS

Projects consultants must be recruited to help guide the overall project implementation, documentation, and completion. This team must consist of judicatory leaders, pastors, laity, and professionals who have special expertise in cross racial and cross cultural appointments and ministries. Consultants may be brought from outside the membership of any particular church if necessary, but each

consultant must know the polity of the church where the project is to be implemented in order to be helpful and effective.

DEVELOPING INSTRUMENTS FOR THE MODEL

In order to maximize the effectiveness of the workshop and its benefits to the judicatory, evaluative instruments should be developed to facilitate data gathering, analysis, and planning. The following instruments may be developed to fulfill this process: Cabinet (Leadership) Survey, Workshop Surveys (i.e. Pre Test, Post Test, Evaluation Forms), Workshop Evaluation by Planning Committee, and Recommendations.

COMPILING FINDINGS AND RESULTS

After compiling the results of the pre test, post test, participants' evaluation, and the planning committee's evaluation, certain basic findings may emerge. These findings must be documented and reviewed by the Planning Committee, the Project Consultants, and the leadership. The documentation must include recommendations for future direction.

DEVELOPING CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

At this stage in the project, certain conclusions can and should be made on the basis of all the findings and results of the project. These conclusions may be most important to the improvement of future cross racial and cross cultural appointments. Their relevance to the focus is certain because they have emerged from direct implementation among pastors and laity who participated in the workshop on cross racial and cross cultural appointments.

The conclusions drawn from the findings of the project must be used as the basis for making recommendations to the those responsible for appointment-making in the Church. The conclusions inform our understanding of the nature, purpose, and goals of cross racial and cross cultural appointments. They also help in the development of recommendations, which help to improve the cross racial and cross cultural appointment-making process, and contribute to the identification, planning, implementation, and expansion of multiracial and multicultural ministries throughout the Church.

See the appendix for details on the Michigan Area Workshop on Cross Racial and Cross Cultural Appointments held at Okemos Community Church in Okemos, Michigan from April 22-23, 1994.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY OF EVALUATIONS

EVALUATIONS

The project was evaluated at three levels. First, it was evaluated by participants at the Michigan Area Workshop on Cross Racial and Cross Cultural Appointments. Second, contextual associates (see appendix for membership details) evaluated the workshop as a planning team. Third, the writer evaluated the project from theological and practical standpoints. The following summary reflects the details contained in the appendix.

Participants called for more training opportunities for congregations and pastors in practical skills for cross racial and cross cultural appointments. They felt a lack of better understanding of the purpose and need for cross racial and cross cultural appointments. They wanted more sharing about the "success stories" in cross racial and cross cultural appointments. They wanted to see more openness between cabinet and congregation during the appointment making process.

Contextual associates (workshop planning committee) made the following evaluation:

1. Workshop staff must be inclusive, with Native American, African American, Latino, Asian American and European American leaders.
2. Need for a letter of encouragement from the bishop to boost registration.
3. Though churches were asked to send teams, there was not enough time in the design to make use of local church teams.
4. There was too much time for keynoter, but not enough for discussion on racism.
5. Languauge was "heady" and not emotional.
6. We need to restate the purpose of the event at the beginning of the workshop.
7. The participants' evaluations were mostly positive.
8. There were 131 registrations and 15 persons did not show up. A total of eight leaders attended, including Bishops Donald Ott and Joel Martinez, all District Superintendents from Detroit and West Michigan Conferences and a District Superintendent from Wisconsin Conference.

The writer's evaluation is both theological and practical. On the theological side, cross racial and cross cultural appointments are:

1. means to a greater end. They are imperative to relevant and effective Church ministries in any multiracial and/or multicultural society.
2. primarily a communal responsibility of the whole Church.

Practically, cross racial and cross cultural appointments are still in infancy. I believe that the wave of the future is multiracial and multicultural ministries and congregations. In the future, the world will become more inclusive as communications and economics draw peoples and nations closer together. The Church will have to minister to the global village. Through cross racial and cross cultural appointments today, the Church is preparing for that future.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The contextual associates, convened as the workshop planning committee, made the following recommendations.

1. There should be another workshop held by 1998.
2. The next workshop must be audio taped.
3. Workshop leadership must be inclusive.
4. The Area office must keep the official file for future workshops with the Assistant to the Bishop.
5. Unused funds must be preserved for the next event.
6. A handbook on cross racial and cross cultural appointments needs to be produced for use within the congregations of the Michigan Area.

CHAPTER SIX

MULTIRACIAL AND MULTICULTURAL MINISTRIES IN THE TWENTY FIRST CENTURY

FUTURE DIRECTIONS

As the twenty first century approaches, its implications and imperatives are already impinging upon our lives today. Racially and culturally segregated communities today are soon going to be a thing of the past.

Church forms of ministry and patterns of leadership must be relevant to this emerging trend. In fact, the Church must lead the way toward inclusiveness because inclusiveness is the goal of Christianity. All human beings long for inclusion within the Chiefdom of God, and the Church must show the way to this goal.

This model must never be done half-heartedly. It should not be implemented in places where the leadership to implement it is not committed fully to inclusiveness. It must be implemented wherever the people are ready to let the future begin among them. Those who seek God's Chiefdom of justice and righteousness are ready for this model.

APPLICABLE SETTINGS

This model is applicable wherever there are people of various races and cultures. When applied in racially and culturally exclusive contexts, this model can mainly serve as an experiment to broaden the perspectives of the people. Effective cross racial and cross cultural appointments must aim for the nurturing of inclusiveness within the Church. When demographics make inclusiveness practically impossible, effective cross racial and cross cultural appointment may be a practical impossibility. The most effective cross racial and cross cultural appointments happen where there are people of various races and cultures present.

This model might be used in urban, inner-city, and suburban settings where the population is racially and culturally diverse; or on college and university campuses, where students and faculty may already be exposed to various forms of diversity. The model is suitable for United Methodist Churches and other Christian communions where the polity and theology are inclusive. Congregational churches may benefit from this model wherever the polity has been or is becoming racially and/or culturally inclusive.

LIMITATIONS AND POSSIBILITIES

This model can be used in churches with episcopal and/or congregational polities, depending on whether the polity is racially and culturally inclusive. Though an appointment or assignment process is unique to episcopal type Churches (such as the United Methodist, Episcopal, Catholic, and Lutheran churches), the goals are achievable in a congregational or presbyterian type church. Churches with congregational polity would have to amend the appointment process to conform to their patterns of election or employment of pastors.

This model has several limitations. It is not suitable in racially and/or culturally exclusive settings. The model requires a multiracial and/or multicultural context to be effective. Furthermore, the model is not effective through hierarchical imposition. It has to be desired by the people among whom it will be applied. It is not a model which lends itself well to heavy handed manipulation.

Finally, the model is not applicable to churches and denominations that are racially exclusive. There are racially exclusive churches in America today. Without discussing the historical and theological reasons for the existence of racially exclusive churches in America, it is important to know that this model aims for racial and cultural inclusiveness and will not be applicable where these goals are intentionally rejected.

APPENDICES

CROSS RACIAL/CULTURAL APPOINTMENT CABINET SURVEY

I. **PERSONALS**

1. Years on Cabinet: ___A. One ___B. Two ___C. Three ___D. Four ___E. Five ___F. Six
2. Sex: ___A. Male ___B. Female
3. Age: ___A. 30-40 yrs. ___B. 41-60 yrs. ___C. 61-70 yrs.
4. Martial Status: ___A. Single ___B. Married ___C. Divorced ___D. Widowed
5. How many years have you served as an ordained clergy in the U.M.C.? _____

II.

1. Do you have a cross racial or cross cultural appointment on your district in 1993? ____A. Yes ___B. No
2. Has your district had a cross racial or cross cultural appointment before 1993? ___A. Yes ___B. No ___C. Not Sure
3. If you have a cross racial/cross cultural appointment on your district in 1993, how many such appointments do you now have?

_____

_

III. List the primary priorities and issues you have to consider before making a cross racial/cross cultural appointment.

IV. List the primary issues you usually have to deal with after you make a cross racial/cross cultural appointment to a church for the first time.

V. What are your goals/and purposes for cross racial/cross cultural appointments?

VI. What are the key benefits of cross racial/cross cultural appointments?

VII. What are the key benefits of cross racial/cross cultural ministries?

VIII. What are the primary liabilities of cross racial/cross cultural appointments?

IX. What are the primary liabilities of cross racial/cross cultural ministries?

X. If you had to improve our present system of making and sustaining cross racial and cross cultural appointments, what would you do differently, and how would you change it?

CROSS RACIAL AND CROSS CULTURAL APPOINTMENTS MICHIGAN AREA, THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

WORKSHOP PRE AND POST TEST

DEFINITIONS: Cross racial/cross cultural appointments are appointments where the pastor comes from a different race and/or culture than either all or most members of the congregation.

Multiracial and multicultural are used in this survey in reference to situations where more than two races and/or cultures are represented.

I. PERSONAL INFORMATION: (Check only one category in each question)

1. SEX: __A. Male __B. Female
2. STATUS: __A. Laity __B. Clergy
3. MARITAL: __A. Single __B. Married __C. Divorced __D. Widowed
4. AGE: __A. (15-29) __B. (30-45) __C. (46-60) __D. (60 & UP)
5. RACE: __A. White __B. Black __C. Hispanic __D. Asian
   __E. Native American __F. Pacific Islander
6. EDUCATION: __A. High School __B. College
   __C. Graduate School __D. Other
7. CONFERENCE: __A. West Michigan __B. Detroit __C. Other

II. PERSONAL VIEWS: (Check the choice that best reflects your preference) [In #s 9 to 15, only laity must respond to underlined options]

8. Cross racial and cross cultural appointments are good for the Church? ___A. Yes ___B. No ___C. Maybe

9. I will pastor/<u>accept</u> a Black church/<u>pastor</u>. ___A. Now ___B. Later ___C. Never

10. I will pastor/<u>accept</u> an Asian church/<u>pastor</u>. ___A. Now ___B. Later ___C. Never

11. I will pastor/<u>accept</u> a White church/<u>pastor</u>. ___A. Now ___B. Later ___C. Never

12. I will pastor/<u>accept</u> a Hispanic church/<u>pastor</u>. ___A. Now ___B. Later ___C. Never

13. I will pastor/<u>accept</u> a Native church/<u>pastor</u>. ___A. Now ___B. Later ___C. Never

14. If I had to choose my own church/<u>pastor</u> right now, I will most likely choose a _____ church/<u>pastor</u>. ___A. Asian ___B. Black ___C. Native American ___D. Hispanic ___E. White

15. I have previously served/<u>been</u> in a cross racial and/or cross cultural appointment/<u>congregation</u>? ___A. Yes ___B. No ___C. Never

16. I prefer multiracial/cultural membership churches to single racial-/cultural membership churches. ___A. Yes ___B. No ___C. Maybe

17. I prefer multiracial/cultural ministries to single racial/cultural ministries. ___A. Yes ___B. No ___C. Maybe

18. I prefer single racial/cultural membership churches with multi-racial/cultural ministries. ___A. Yes ___B. No ___C. Maybe

19. I prefer multiracial/cultural membership churches focusing on ministries to the predominant race. ___A. Yes ___B. No ___C. Maybe

20. I prefer single racial/cultural membership churches with single racial/cultural ministry focus. ___A. Yes ___B. No ___C. Maybe

21. I prefer multiracial/cultural membership churches with multiracial/cultural ministry focus. ___A. Yes ___B. No ___C. Maybe

III. ISSUES IN CROSS RACIAL AND CROSS CULTURAL APPOINTMENTS.
(Rank in importance, with 1= most important and 9= least important)
[Answer #s 26a & 27a for pre test, and 26b & 27b for post test only]

22. What are the five most important needs of a pastor in a cross racial and/or cross cultural appointment?
___A. Family and professional support systems.
___B. Conflict resolution skills.
___C. Multicultural and multiracial understanding and experience.
___D. Leadership style and experience.
___E. Strong self identity and appreciation.
___F. Good theology and sense of purpose.
___G. Strong preaching abilities.
___H. Good interpersonal relations skills.
___I. Strong sense of and commitment to inclusiveness.

23. What are the five most important needs of a congregation experiencing a cross racial and/or cross cultural appointment?
___A. Strong congregational support systems.
___B. Conflict resolution systems.
___C. Good evaluation and planning systems.
___D. Appreciation for diverse leadership styles.
___E. Commitment to multiracial and multicultural ministries.
___F. Appreciation for diversity in worship and liturgy.
___G. Relational skills: Hospitality to strangers.
___H. Willingness to make necessary changes.
___I. Commitment to inclusiveness.

24. What are the purposes of cross racial/cross cultural appointments?
___A. To symbolize our inclusiveness as a denomination.
___B. To find job placement for pastors.
___C. To build multiracial/cultural churches and ministries.
___D. To bring about racial/cultural healing in church/society.
___E. To provide the most appropriate pastoral leadership.
___F. To enforce the policies of the church bureaucracy.
___G. To promote and celebrate inclusiveness.
___H. To respond effectively to realities of the time.
___I. To offer opportunities for spiritual growth and healing.

25. What are the goals of cross racial/cross cultural ministries?
___A. To make "open" itineracy really open.
___B. To break down racial and cultural barriers.
___C. To expand and deepen the life and witness of the church.
___D. To help people live their faith more fully.
___E. To offer the world an alternative way of life.
___F. To show that God's grace reaches out all persons.
___G. To establish, develop, and sustain inclusiveness.
___H. To try something new.
___I. To glorify God on earth as it is in heaven.

26a. The Workshop will help me explore cross racial and cross cultural appointments. __A. Yes __B. No __C. Most Likely __D. Not Sure

26b. The Workshop helped me explore cross racial and cross cultural appointments. __A. Yes __B. No __C. Most Likely __D. Not Sure

27a. The Workshop will encourage and/or support my desire for and/or my experience with cross racial and cross cultural appointments and ministries. __A. Yes __B. No __C. Most Likely __D. Not Sure

27b. The Workshop encouraged and supported me in my desire for and/or experience with cross racial and cross cultural appointments and ministries. __A. Yes __B. No __C. Most Likely __D. Not Sure

1994 MICHIGAN AREA WORKSHOP
CROSS RACIAL/CROSS CULTURAL APPOINTMENTS
Friday & Saturday, April 22-23
Okemos Community Church
Okemos, Michigan

EVALUATION FORM

Directions: Complete all questions as carefully as you can.

I. PERSONAL INFORMATION (Check one response for each question)

1. I am: a.___Clergy b.___Laity
2. Sex: a.___Female b.___Male
3. Martial: a.___Single b.___Married c.___Widowed
4. Age: a.___30-45 b.___46-60 c.___60-UP
5. Race: a.___White b.___Black c.___Hispanic
   d.___Asian e.___Native American f.___Other
6. Education: a.___High School b.___College
   c.___Graduate School d.___Other
7. Conference: a.___Detroit b.___West Michigan c.___Other

II. WORKSHOP EVALUATION

8. The First Workshop I attended was:
   a.____Unleashing The Church b.____Celebrating
   c.____Getting Ready d.____Biblical Witness
   e.____Leadership Styles f.____Color of God

9. The Second Workshop I attended was:
   a.____Unleashing The Church b.____Celebrating
   c.____Getting Ready d.____Biblical Witness
   e.____Leadership Styles f.____Color of God
10. How would you evaluate the first Workshop you attended?
    [Circle one number] **(Excellent) 1 2 3 4 5 (Poor)**
    Comments:_____
11. How would you evaluate the second Workshop you attended?
    [Circle one number] **(Excellent) 1 2 3 4 5 (Poor)**
    Comments:_____
12. Do you find the Workshops relevant to your practice of ministry?
    ____A. Yes ____B. No
13. What was most helpful?_____
    _____
14. What was least helpful?_____
    _____
15. Evaluate the Community Building Process on Friday night.
    [Circle one number] (Excellent) 1 2 3 4 5 (Poor)
16. Evaluate Keynote I on Friday night.
    [Circle one number] (Excellent) 1 2 3 4 5 (poor)
17. Evaluate Group Process on Racism on Friday night.
    [Circle one number] (Excellent) 1 2 3 4 5 (Poor)
18. Evaluate Keynote II on Saturday afternoon.
    [Circle one number] (Excellent) 1 2 3 4 5 (Poor)
19. Evaluate Panel Discussion on Saturday afternoon.
    [Circle one number] (Excellent) 1 2 3 4 5 (Poor)
20. Evaluate your overall experience this weekend at the Workshop.
    [Circle one number] (Excellent) 1 2 3 4 5 (Poor)

LIST OF PROJECT CONSULTANTS

1. Ms. L. Cecile Adams, Director
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   The United Methodist Church
   21700 Northwestern Hwy., Suite 1200
   Southfield, Michigan 48075-4917

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3. Rev. Dr. Linda Lee, Pastor
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4. Rev. A. Edward Perkins, Superintendent
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5. Rev. Dr. Donald A. Scavella, Sr., Executive Director
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6. Rev. Dr. Robert L. Selberg, Associate Pastor
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MICHIGAN AREA OF THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

WORKSHOP ON *CROSS RACIAL AND CROSS CULTURAL APPOINTMENTS*

APRIL 22-23, 1994 OKEMOS COMMUNITY CHURCH OKEMOS, MICHIGAN

SCHEDULE

Friday, April 22:

5:00 PM	Registration
5:45	Dinner
6:30	Community Building
7:00	Worship
7:15	Plenary Session: Keynote Part I
	Bishop *Joel N. Martinez*, Nebraska Area
8:00	Plenary Reaction/Discussion
8:30	Break
8:45	Group Process on Racism Led by *Joseph Agne*
9:45	Closing

Saturday, April 23:

8:30 AM	Late Registration
8:45	Devotions
9:00	Introductions
9:30	Workshop Session I
10:45	Break
11:00	Workshop Session II
12:30 PM	Lunch
	Bishop *Joel N. Martinez*, Keynote Part II
2:00	Break
2:15	Panel Discussion
3:30	Closing Communion
	Bishop *Donald A. Ott*, Michigan Area

WORKSHOPS

1. UNLEASHING THE CHURCH THROUGH CROSS-RACIAL AND CROSS-CULTURAL APPOINTMENTS by Joe Agne.

Racism has continued to stifle the ministry of the Church. The business of the Church is to set people free (from whatever binds and blinds them), and get them out into ministry. This workshop will focus on the issue of racism as an obvious challenge to cross-racial appointments. It offers ways to deal with racial issues which may appear in cross-racial and cross-cultural appointments.

2. CELEBRATING CROSS-RACIAL AND CROSS-CULTURAL APPOINTMENTS by Mike Seymour.

This workshop will feature pastors and laity currently in cross-racial appointments, who will share their stories. The purpose of this workshop is to motivate, challenge, and encourage pastors and congregations currently in or considering cross-racial/cross-cultural appointments.

3. GETTING READY FOR OUR FIRST CROSS-RACIAL AND CROSS-CULTURAL APPOINTMENT: Nuts and Bolts by Peter Yoon Sun.

This workshop will be geared primarily toward persons and congregations exploring the possibility of cross-racial and cross-cultural appointments. It will consider issues and questions in making or accepting such appointments, and provide suggestions for dealing with these issues and questions.

4. **LEADERSHIP STYLES AND CULTURAL DIFFERENCES by Henry and Ella Pearson Mitchell.**

This workshop will explore the myths and realities of leadership styles and cultural differences and how they affect cross-racial and cross-cultural appointments.

5. **THE COLOR OF GOD by Warren Hill.**

This workshop will focus on ways to develop support systems in congregations, communities and Annual Conferences, to help ensure viable cross-racial/cross cultural appointments.

IMPORTANT NOTICE FOR ALL PARTICIPANTS:

Surveys are being taken this weekend for the purpose of improving the process of making and sustaining effective cross racial and cross-cultural appointments in our Area. Please make sure that you respond carefully and completely to these surveys. Results of the surveys will be used in a doctoral dissertation to design a handbook on cross racial and cross cultural appointments.

GOALS, METHODS AND RESULTS
MICHIGAN AREA WORKSHOP ON CROSS-RACIAL CROSS-CULTURAL APPOINTMENT

OVERVIEW

The Michigan Area Workshop on Cross Racial and Cross Cultural Appointments brought together 122 participants, including eight workshop leaders. Participants came primarily from congregations in the Detroit and West Michigan Conferences of the United Methodist Church. The Workshop was held at the Okemos Community United Methodist Church in Okemos, Michigan.

PROJECT GOALS

The project was designed by a team of ten contextual associates selected from the Detroit and West Michigan Conferences to accomplish the following goals:

- To develop a better understanding of and appreciation for cross racial and cross cultural appointments.
- To create excitement about cross racial and cross cultural appointments.
- To explore opportunities and strategies for effective cross racial and cross cultural appointments.
- To identify issues and concerns for a handbook on cross racial and cross cultural appointments.
- To celebrate the positive accomplishments of cross racial and cross cultural appointments.

○ Developing Better Understanding and Appreciation

A foremost goal of the project was to develop a better understanding of and appreciation for cross racial and cross cultural appointments. This goal assumes a certain lack of understanding of and appreciation for the meaning, nature, and purpose of cross racial and cross cultural appointments. With increases in cross racial and cross cultural appointments, there is an urgent need to develop better understanding among clergy and laity because they are the ones who must fulfill the demands and responsibilities of such appointments. Better understanding leads to better appreciation.

Understanding and appreciating people of other races and cultures are indispensable prerequisites to effective cross racial and cross cultural appointments and ministries.

○ Creating Excitement

Certain paradigmatic shifts in ministry are necessary whenever there is a transition from traditional ministries to cross racial and cross cultural ministries. These shifts can and do create apprehension for those who resist change. When more people become excited, rather than apprehensive, about cross racial and cross cultural appointments, the Church will make better progress. Where there is excitement about cross racial and cross cultural appointment, the level of commitment its fulfillment is high.

- Exploring Opportunities and Strategies

Effective cross racial and cross cultural appointments often happen where the opportunities are ripe. Some contexts are more feasible than others for such appointments. Some contexts may require more extensive preparation that others. Consequently, it is imperative to explore where the opportunities are, what kinds of opportunities are available, and what strategies are relevant and appropriate for effective cross racial and cross cultural appointments in those contexts.

- Identifying Issues and Concerns

In order to improve the effectiveness of cross racial and cross cultural appointments, it is critical to gather and analyze relevant data. An important goal was the identification of issues and concerns for effective cross racial and cross cultural appointments. These issues and concerns formed the basis for the development of a handbook on cross racial and cross cultural appointments.

- Celebrating the Positive Accomplishments

Celebration is one of the most effective ways to create excitement. People need to celebrate the positive accomplishments of cross racial and cross cultural appointments. It is always a tragedy when, in the absence of positive evidence, people live with the assumption that cross racial and cross cultural appointments are useless and always negative. This notion must be countered, not only with rhetoric and theology, but, by celebration.

METHOD FOR ACCOMPLISHING GOALS

The established goals of the project were accomplished through the employment of a variety of methods and tools. These goals were met through the following methods:

- Workshop on Cross Racial and Cross Cultural Appointments:

The Workshop on Cross Racial and Cross Cultural Appoint-ments was held to accomplish the goals set forth by the planning committee. The racial and cultural diversity of participants and leaders allowed the Workshop to become an effective means through which to accomplish the goals.

- Presentations by Nationally Renowned Church Leaders:

Nationally renowned church leaders led specialized workshops and made plenary and small group presentations. These leaders helped participants to learn, raise questions, think critically, reflect deeply, speak out boldly about their concerns, fears, callings, vocations, anxieties and hopes.

- Surveys, Questionaires and Evaluation Forms:

At the beginning of the Workshop, participants took pre test surveys. District Superintendents were polled and notes were taken during the Workshop. Participants were surveyed at the close of the Workshop with post test and evaluation forms. These tools helped in the data gathering and analysis process.

○ Plenary Discussion of Racism:

A discussion of the nature, basis, impact, extent, and expressions of racism within the Church and society was conducted in plenary. All participants and leaders were present and shared their concerns, issues, and experiences. This spirited discussion revealed the passions and pressures experienced by all present and provided a basis for continued discussion of the issues of racism.

○ Panel Discussion:

Another method of accomplishing the goals was a panel discussion. This allowed workshop prticipants and leaders to discuss issues in cross racial and cross cultural appointments. The panel was held in the final plenary. Workshop participants had the full benefits of workshop experience before the plenary. This method optimized the level of discussion and focus needed to make substantial progress with the production of a handbook.

○ Collection and Analysis of Data:

Throughout the Workshop process, valuable data were gathered on the present status of cross racial and cross cultural appointments. Surveys and evaluations were the primary tools used to gather data. Data addressed strengths, weaknesses, levels of understanding, degrees of need, methods of preparation, and extent of misunderstanding of cross racial and cross cultural appointment.

THE WORKSHOP MODEL

This workshop model brought together clergy and laity from diverse racial, ethnic, and religious backgrounds to discuss strategies and promote cross racial and cross cultural pastoral appointments. The model helped congregations to become more inclusive in their understanding, witness, leadership, and ministries.

ANTICIPATED LEARNINGS

I set out to learn if the project goals could be met by the implementation of the design.

ACTUAL LEARNINGS

As a result of having participated in the design, planning, and implementation of this model in ministry, I learned that:

- The Design Could Accomplish The Project Goals:

Through implementation of the design, all goals were met. The design lends itself to replicability in situations with similar ecclesiastical polity and appointment process. Its success was due to active support and participation from conference leadership and congregational representatives; racially and culturally inclusive leadership in the planning and

implementation process; and programmatic relevancy to the present realities, challenges, and opportunities for cross racial and cross cultural appointments.

○ Different Meaning to Different People:

The Workshop revealed many things about the state of cross racial and cross cultural appointments in the Michigan Area. One of the most critical revelations was that there is no general agreement on what cross racial and cross cultural appointment means. There is urgent need for consensus on the meaning of cross racial and cross cultural appointment.

○ Constant Need to Clarify Goals and Purposes:

There is a constant need to clarify goals and purposes. Presently, there is little clarification of goals and purposes for cross racial and cross cultural appointments within our congregations. It is important that goals and purposes be clarified, not only for the cabinets (and selected congregations), but for the entire Michigan Area. When goals and purposes are clarified for all, there will be better understanding and ownership of the process by more persons and congregations.

○ Wider Acceptance and Practice Are Possible:

The current restrictive level of acceptance and practice of cross racial and cross cultural appointments are due primarily to lack of understanding and appreciation for racial and cultural diversity and inclusiveness in the life, witness, leadership, and ministries of the Church. Secondly, the abundance of racial bigotry, stereotypes and fear in our society is a

hindrance to wider acceptance and practice of cross racial and cross cultural appointments. Intentional interventions to broaden acceptance and encourage practice of cross racial and cross cultural appointments are necessary.

WHAT HAPPENED TO ME IN THE PROCESS

The process of designing, implementing, and evaluating this project was one of the most challenging and educational experiences of my life and ministry. I came to know many persons across the State of Michigan and several nationally acclaimed leaders of the Church. Here are some of the most significant things that happened to me in the process.

- Discovering My Need For More Education:

I entered this process with a sense that, having served two previous cross racial and cross cultural appointments and presently serving my third cross racial and cross cultural appointment, I was an expert on these issues, if not from a theoretical standpoint, certainly from a practical standpoint. However, by the end of the process, I received more education from people of various races and cultures. Now, I am thoroughly convinced of my own need for more exposure and sensitivity to the needs and demands of cross racial and cross cultural appointments.

○ **Receiving More Than I Could Give:**

The entire process gave me more than I could give. It became for me a growing and maturing experience as I delved deeper and deeper into the intricate nuances of culture specific and race based understandings, expectations and practices of cross racial and cross cultural appointments. Rather than giving, I became the receiver as my perspectives broadened and my vision cleared.

○ **Dealing With Resistance and Frustration:**

Early in the process, I experienced some resistance from friends and colleagues who feared that cross racial and cross cultural appointments would be manipulated by the White majority toward its own preconceived interests.

I felt some frustration when some of these persons would not attend the Workshop. They missed a significant opportunity to learn and to share. My main source of encouragement was the enthusiasm and participation of a diverse core of 122 participants from all the major racial and ethnic cultures within the Michigan Area of the United Methodist Church. Also the participation of two persons from Wisconsion, one from Illinois, and one Baptist pastor from Michigan provided further encouragement. I learned from the experience that racism has caused deep wounds and distrust even within the Church and that the road to inclusiveness will have to be trod by pioneers of every race and culture who will not relent in their pursuit of justice and peace for all. The interest of an African American Baptist pastor from Michigan, who attended the Workshop, in becoming a United Methodist pastor indicates that there is great hope for the whole Church through cross racial and cross cultural appointments.

○ Being inspired by support from both Cabinets.

Though cross racial and cross cultural appointments are controversial in some quarters, it was inspiring to be supported and encouraged by the cabinets of both conferences throughout the process. This made the planning and implementation easier. From the outset, ownership of the project was established and funding came from both conferences.

○ Developing a Handbook With The Cabinets:

The idea of a handbook on cross racial and cross cultural appointments came from the contextual associates and was affirmed by the cabinets of the Detroit and West Michigan Conferences. The process of developing the handbook involved direct participation of the contextual associates and the members of the cabinets. The cabinets reviewed the content and process, and made improvements on the handbook. Contextual associates read and compiled ideas. This process allowed me to experience the depth of commitment among the leadership to this issue and the urgency of the need for a handbook to help improve the process of making effective cross racial and cross cultural appointments.

MOST SIGNIFICANT LEARNINGS

The project led to some significant learnings about my context, theology and working relations with others in ministry.

- **Context:**

I learned that serving as a conference staff person affords me opportunities to initiate programs and collaborate with conference leadership regionally to achieve goals that are helpful to a broad segment of the denomination.

Also, I learned that the cabinets and bishop can and do provide significant leverage in recruiting support for initiatives that fulfill conference needs.

- **Theology:**

From a theological standpoint, I learned that cross racial and cross cultural appointments are not creations of the modern Church, but a continuation of an ancient ministry of the Church. The incarnation of Jesus Christ is a typical example of a cross racial and cross cultural appointment. Jesus comes on an "*appointment*" from heaven into the world of sinful humans and transforms all who voluntarily accept him as Lord and Savior. Jesus shepherds his flock to understand, appreciate and live out a new ethic, based on the culture of heaven. It represents the ministry of the divine Messiah among sinful humans. It also represents an intervention of the culture of Christ into the cultures of the world.

The pentecostal experience of the disciples in the Upper Room can be understood as having more to do with ears and hearing than with speaking in tongues. Only when the Church can hear clearly the messages of the Gospel through various racial and cultural ears (contexts) can the Church effectively be the Church of our universal savior and lord.

○ Working Relations With Others In Ministry:

The process of planning and implementation required many hours of close collaboration with others, involving several meetings with the cabinets of both conferences, the planning committee, workshop leaders, hotel staff, district and local church leaders, and support staff. These contacts developed into meaningful relationships for ministry and revealed several things about my working relations with others. I work best in a team, where members share responsibilities and common goals. Many persons applauded the registration process which I supervised with the help of the planning committee and my secretary.

I learned that it is difficult to be discouraged about a cause that is necessary. Though registration stood at only 56 persons two weeks before the Workshop, extensive recruitment resulted in total workshop attendance of 122 persons out of our goal of 150. The necessity of this project led to an extensive network of relationships that ensured cooperation and the accomplishment of our goals. The project was a big success.

MAKING VISIBLE THE CONNECTION:

CROSS RACIAL AND CROSS CULTURAL APPOINTMENTS

A Manual For Pastors, Cabinets And Congregations

BY

CHARLES S. G. BOAYUE, JR.

MICHIGAN AREA OF THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION.....117

CHAPTER 1 PREPARATION.....119

A. Congregational Preparation

B. Cabinet Preparation

C. Pastor And Family Preparation

D. Support Systems

E. Asking The Right Questions

CHAPTER 2 BEIND READY.....126

A. Congregational Indicators

B. Pastoral Indicators

C. Racial Indicators

D. Cultural Indicators

CHAPTER 3 THE FIRST MOVE.....133

A. Selection and Appointment Process

B. Congregational Preparation Forum

C. Announcement Celebration

D. Covenant Service

CHAPTER 4 THE BIG BEGINNING.....139

A. The First Week's Business

B. First Sunday Worship Celebration

C. The Honeymoon

D. Culture Shocks

CHAPTER 5 REALITY CHECK.....145

A. When Honeymoon's Over

B. The Future Begins

C. Hurdles to Cross

D. Support Therapy

CHAPTER 6 THE DOs AND DON'Ts.....150

A. The Ten Don'ts

B. The Ten Dos

CHAPTER 7 CONCLUSION.....156

INTRODUCTION

This handbook is designed and intended for use by United Methodist congregations, district superintendents, pastors, and bishops in making cross racial and cross cultural appointments. Increasing numbers of cross racial and/or cross cultural appointments in the Michigan Area have brought many issues and concerns to attention. In a context of racial hostilities across many communities in Michigan, it is imperative that the Church improve its understanding and methods of making effective cross racial and cross cultural appointments.

This handbook addresses many of the critical issues in such appointments within the Church today. Chapter One deals with issues of preparation for each and every cross racial and cross cultural appointment. Chapter Two lists readiness indicators for such appointments. Chapter Three outlines basic steps to be taken by the cabinet and the congregation in determining and making a cross racial and/or cross cultural appointment.

Chapter Four presents the dynamics of the first week's and earlier experiences in a cross racial or cross cultural appointment. Chapter Five outlines the pitfalls and the opportunities of cross racial and cross cultural appointments.

Chapter Six lists some taboos and acceptable practices of cross racial and cross cultural appointments. Chapter Seven offers conclusions that might help those who are concerned about effective cross racial and cross cultural appointments and ministries.

This handbook is a gift to all the saints who labor to make the Church faithful to its ministry of reconciliation by making visible the connection. May your labor bring peace to the world and glory to God.

CHAPTER ONE: PREPARATION

Each cross racial and/or cross cultural appointment requires careful and intentional preparation. The preparation process is involved at all levels of the appointment process.

Failed cross racial and/or cross cultural appointments are usually caused by inadequate preparation. Consequently, we must begin this process by turning our attention to the preparation process.

Congregational Preparation

The first place where preparation for a cross racial and/or cross cultural appointment happens is in the congregation. If the congregation is neither willing nor ready for a cross racial or cross cultural appointment, it would be inappropriate to impose such an appointment upon it. If a congregation is willing and ready for a cross racial and/or cross cultural appointment, it would be unwise to deprive it. Congregational preparation allows intentional readiness for cross racial and cross cultural appointment.

Cabinet Preparation

Congregational preparation must be coupled with appropriate cabinet preparation. Since appointments are made by the bishop and the cabinet, there must be collaboration between congregation and cabinet for the achievement of this goal. This means that both the cabinet and the congregation need preparation if the process of making and sustaining effective appointments is to become a reality.

Cabinet preparation involves several issues and steps: identification and availability of racially and culturally competent clergy; orientation for cabinet and prospective appointee; scheduling appropriate meetings, trainings, and consultations; evaluating congregational clarity of purpose, objectives, and readiness; establishment of support systems; and long-range planning for the congregation involved in the potential appointment.

Pastor And Family Preparation

Preparation of the congregation and the cabinet are incomplete prerequisites for effective cross racial and cross cultural appointments until there is adequate preparation of the pastor and his or her family as well. Whether the pastor is single or married, appropriate preparation must be designed to fulfill the needs of the pastor (and family). Preparation

is pivotal to the success of all appointments. Since the pastor exercises leadership in the appointment, it is critical that the pastor (and family) be prepared for the challenges and opportunities of cross racial and cross cultural ministries.

Support Systems

Good preparation is to cross racial and cross cultural appointment as a good foundation is to a house. It is wrong to assume that all a house needs is good foundation. Though a good foundation is always necessary, without good structures (walls, beams, doors, windows, floor, roof, and ceiling), a house will crumble down to its foundation during adversity.

The same analogy is true about effective cross racial and/or cross cultural appointments. Once preparation is complete, the next step in the process, the establishment of strong and relevant support systems, must be completed.

There are three kinds of support systems needed for effective cross racial and/or cross cultural appointments. They are pastoral, congregational, and ministry support. Each of these kinds of support is critical in keeping various personalities and resources available for ministry. These support systems must always be kept in strategic and healthy balance since it is easier to destroy the healthy balance than to strengthen it.

Pastoral support is critical to the pastor and his or her family and can affect the level of effectiveness of ministry. In every cross racial and/or cross cultural appointment, the pastor must relate to large numbers of people whose world views, understandings of ministry, expectations and traditions may be significantly different.

In order to shepherd the flocks effectively, pastors need to understand and to share in the basic traditions and aspirations of the flock. Pastors must identify with the people they lead. Pastoral support involves the provision of opportunities for pastoral growth and for support to the pastor's family in times of need and of celebration. Such support must always be available and must never be based on performance or accomplishment in ministry.

Pastoral support must be felt and appreciated by the pastor's family. Pastors in cross racial and cross cultural appointments need continuous support because the intricacies of relationship, power, control, and focused ministry require strong support for those at the center of these adjustments. Pastors and their families are people too. They have feelings, emotions, expectations, weaknesses and strengths. Like the people they lead, pastors and their families need and deserve constant affirmation in their lives and ministries.

The sense of being appreciated unconditionally is often dramatically lacking in situations of cross racial and cross cultural appointments. The pastor often feels isolated

when there is no support and appreciation. Though members may already have networks of support locally, pastors who feel isolated look for support outside their places of residence and ministry. Often, they look to communities from their past, where there is affirmation, understanding and support. To optimize the effectiveness of any cross racial and/or cross cultural appointment one must ensure that the pastor and his or her family are supported in their personal relationships as well as in their professional functions.

Congregational support systems involve intentional and relevant organization of opportunities for learning, counselling, and healing within the context of congregational life.

The congregation, as a body, may be taken through various group processes to consult, resolve problems, make decisions, and express grievances and anxieties. However, in situations where individual members of the congregation have needs which they do not want to share in a congregational context, it is appropriate that the pastor handles such situations. Otherwise, individuals who have personal biases could use the congregational process to undermine the authority and responsibilities of the pastor.

To avoid this and to affirm the pastor's leadership, it is imperative that congregational support systems deal with congregational concerns in congregational forums. That way, congregational support can be established around congregational needs and personal support around personal needs.

When there is sufficient reason to doubt the professional maturity of a pastor, such pastor should not be appointed to a cross racial or cross cultural situation. Cross racial and cross cultural ministry requires racial maturity and cultural competence.

Asking The Right Questions

Cross racial and/or cross cultural appointments pose challenges and opportunities. These challenges are rooted in traditions, interests and perceptions of the people. Responding to challenges and opportunities require precision and relevance. Precision and relevance must be used in addressing the challenges and opportunities of ministry in cross racial and cross cultural situations. To do this, the Church must go beyond traditions, interests and perceptions by asking the right questions. The right questions are being asked when the questions are precise and relevant to the situation of ministry. Questions that have no direct relation to the situation where ministry must occur are not the right questions. Good questions are not necessarily the right questions until they address the real problems and needs of the people and their context.

Long before a cross racial and/or cross cultural appointment is made, and especially after it is made, the people must be led to raise the right questions. People will raise the right questions when they realize that their

concerns, fears, and anxieties matter to their leaders and to the church. They will not raise the right questions when they perceive their leaders to be indifferent or antagonistic. Establishing confidence and trust are critical prerequisites to asking the right questions.

CHAPTER TWO: BEING READY

The preceding chapter establishes the basic process for getting ready to make and experience cross racial and cross cultural appointments in the United Methodist Church. Successful completion of this process leads to readiness for cross racial and cross cultural appointments. However, completion is no guarantee that one is ready. Readiness means preparedness and commitment to make adjustments in one's own way of life and ministry. Readiness means willingness to have new leadership and new methods of ministry. Readiness means preparedness to expand boundaries of understanding, relationships, and commitments.

The indicators of readiness for cross racial and cross cultural appointment are congregational, pastoral, racial, cultural, and vocational indicators. Let us examine each of these indicators to see how they are employed to determine extent of readiness.

Congregational Indicators

Congregational indicators include financial commitment, educational focus, leadership sharing, worship style, support system and futuristic outlook. A congregation is ready for cross racial and/or cross cultural appointment when it is willing and ready to commit all its financial

resources to the priorities of ministry under new pastoral leadership. When a congregation uses its finances to manipulate leadership and minstry, it is not ready for cross racial and/or cross cultural appointment. The congregations that are most ready may increase their financial contributions to ministry out of a deep sense of excitement about ministry in a cross racial and/or cross cultural appointment.

Another indicator of congregational readiness for cross racial and/or cross cultural appointment is educational focus. Some congregations will say that they want a cross racial or cross cultural appointment, but may either not understand or accept the need for shifts in focus of their educational programs. Children and adults in cross-racial and/or cross-cultural settings need to learn who Jesus Christ is from various perspectives. The structure and focus of Sunday school curricula, preaching, worship and liturgy, as well as evangelization and mission must become inclusive and relevant to the various experiences and struggles of people from diverse backgrounds. To remain indifferent to these imperatives means that the congregation is not ready for cross racial and cross cultural appointment.

An important indicator of congregational readiness which is often taken for granted is leadership sharing. The congregation must realize its obligation to share leadership with people of other races and/or cultures as the membership grows to become multiracial and/or multicultural. When a congregation is unready to share leadership, it may not, at

the same time, be ready to have effective ministries in a cross racial and/or cross cultural setting.

The leadership of a cross racial or cross cultural pastor is, by definition, a participation in a leadership sharing experience with the members of the congregation. If the congregation is unwilling to share leadership (power) with people of other races and/or cultures, it may also be unready to allow the pastor to have full pastoral authority and leadership.

No cross racial and/or cross cultural appointment can be effective without some basic shifts in worship styles. Worship stands at the heart of Christian faith and discipleship. People and pastors of various races and cultures have different experiences and expectations in worship. The styles of worship make worship relevant and meaningful, eliciting faithful response and discipleship. When the style of worship is prohibitive to faithful response and discipleship, worship is meaningless and irrelevant. Meaningless worship does not yield meaningful response.

In cross racial and cross cultural appointments meaningful and relevant worship experiences are a necessity. Worship must be meaningful to all persons involved. Worship must be planned to address the experiences and needs of all the people. Music, songs, choruses, preaching, expressions of emotion and thought, liturgical movements, sacramental celebrations and symbolisms must be interwoven in intentional

and creative ways to evoke the deepest possible human response to the call of God and to the demands of ministry.

Another congregational indicator of readiness is the presence of systems of support to help augment the enthusiasm of the congregation. Sometimes the demands of ministry in cross racial and cross cultural situations can overwhelm the enthusiasm of a well-intentioned people. Good intentions sometimes must be supported by systems that effectively prevent or resolve problems. The congregation must covenant to specifically support each other in times of difficulties. When a congregation has made such a covenant, it is well on its way to being ready for a cross racial and/or cross cultural appointment.

An important congregational indicator of readiness is a futuristic outlook. A congregation that does not see its mission as a mission with a future goal is not ready to deal effectively with cross racial and cross cultural appointments. Cross racial and cross cultural ministries demand building for the future. When a congregation is focused more on its past than on its future, it is unready for futuristic undertakings such as this.

Pastoral Indicators

Pastoral indicators include the pastor's sense of call and mission, family support, previous experience, support

system, and maturity. To know whether a pastor is ready for cross racial and cross cultural appointment, one has to assess the pastor's sense of call. This allows for a discernment of the pastor's self perceived mission. Pastors whose mission is service to their own ethnic or racial communities are to be appointed differently than those whose mission is to serve communities of diverse ethnic populations and traditions. Also, the pastor's family is critical to every cross-racial appointment primarily because cross racial and cross cultural appointments place the pastor's family in the position of unusually intense involvement in the context of ministry.

This involvement creates a deeply felt need among members of the pastor's family for closer interdependence. Previous experience in cross racial and/or cross cultural ministry can be an indication that a pastor is ready. Without previous experience, it can be expected that the pastor will be doing a lot of on-the-job training. Strong family ties serve as the most basic support system for the pastor.

Family ties must be augmented by professional ties which provide an entree into new relationships and establish familiarity with the new context. Pastoral maturity, as another indicator of readiness, is a means by which a pastor can be assumed ready for the challenging task of leadership in a cross racial and/or cross cultural setting.

Racial Indicators

Racial indicators include racial maturity, diversity and inclusiveness. Racial maturity is a level of growth in race relations and understanding at which a person is able to keep focus upon the goals of ministry even in the midst of racial bigotry and turbulence. Racial maturity is an essential indicator of congregational and pastoral readiness for cross racial and/or cross cultural appointment. Racially immature congregations and pastors are not ready for effective cross racial and/or cross cultural appointment.

Another racial indicator of readiness is diversity. When the congregation or pastor is acquainted and experienced with racial diversity, the chances are better for effective cross racial and/or cross cultural appointment because of the inherent familiarity which goes with previous experience.

Finally, readiness for cross racial and/or cross cultural appointment requires commitment to racial inclusiveness in ministry. The difference between racial diversity and inclusiveness is that diversity involves the presence of people of different background and inclusiveness involves a commitment to power sharing, justice and mutuality among people of various racial and cultural backgrounds.

Cultural Indicators

Cultural indicators include cultural competency, cultural inclusiveness, and cultural diversity. Cultural competency involves being able to communicate and operate effectively within the cultural context of a people. Without cultural competency, relevance and meaning are left to imagination and defaulting assumptions. Stereotypes usually thrive in the absence of relevance and competence. Cultural competency provides the framework for understanding and relevance in ministry.

Cultural inclusiveness requires that the congregation and pastor take seriously the cultural traditions and resources of all the people when planning, implementing and evaluating ministry. Cultural diversity is another important indicator of readiness, especially in a multicultural context. A church with members from various cultural backgrounds has to do evangelization, worship, liturgy, music, stewardship, outreach, Sunday school, and pastoral care in diverse ways in order to be effective across the board.

When congregations and pastors show evidence of commitment to these indicators of readiness, they are ready to enter the special ministries of cross racial and cross cultural appointment. It is at this point that cabinets may confidently consider making cross racial and/or cross cultural appointments.

CHAPTER THREE: THE FIRST MOVE

When the pastor parish relations committee, the cabinet, and the pastor are ready for an appointment, the first move is to ensure a smooth transition at the local church where the transition is being made. The primary purpose of ensuring smooth transition is to avoid the pitfalls of congregational unreadiness while optimizing the prospects of congregational ownership. It needs to be emphasized that cross racial and cross cultural appointments are more likely to be effective where adequate congregational ownership exists.

Consequently, the first move is a series of exercises that engages the congregation in ownership building. After all, the district superintendent meets with the pastor parish relations committee prior to any announcement of pastoral change in order to build ownership. The problem emerges when this kind of ownership is not built within the congregation. Why? Congregational ownership is necessary whenever it is being asked to break away from the norms and traditions it has known. As the district superintendent, pastor parish relations committee and pastor agree on an appointment, the following exercises will help build congregational ownership.

SELECTION AND APPOINTMENT PROCESS

Bishops and district superintendents have the responsibility to select and appoint pastors to charges across the denomination. The selection process is limited in many ways. Pastors who are appointable are those who have previously completed required studies and have been given clearance by the Board of Ordained Ministry, especially if they have Elders orders. The Bishop and Cabinet are required to make appointments from this pool. Not all Elders have the background and call to cross racial and/or cross cultural appointment. There are pastors whose training and experiences limit them to certain contexts. Bishops and cabinets are limited to the extent to which competent appointable pastors are limited.

In light of these limitations, Bishops and cabinets must recognize the tremendous need for intentionality in the selection process. They must search for and identitfy pastors who are culturally, racially and theologically competent for cross-racial and cross-cultural appointment. This may entail a regional and/or national search. If cross racial and cross cultural appointments are to become effective, competent leadership is a necessity.

Once a competent pastor is identified, the appointment making process begins. The process must be specific and relevant to the particular context involved in each case. When a congregation is being encouraged, especially in first

time situations, to enter a new experience, it is a primary responsibility of the Bishop and cabinet to be intentional and relevant to the special needs of effective cross-racial and cross-cultural appointments.

Stereotyping is a taboo in cross racial and cross cultural appointment making. Do not assume that a pastor who once lived in Latin America will be effective among Hispanic people. You must find out details about the circumstances under which this pastor lived in Latin America. After all, it is possible to live in Latin America and still be indifferent and/or ignorant to the cultural and racial nuances of Hispanic people in the United States. Furthermore, all Hispanic people are not the same. It takes a competent person to know that Mexicans are different from Cubans. Similar analogies are true within other races and/or ethnic groups.

Once a selection is made and the appointment fixed, the next step is to help the congregation in understanding and being excited about the appointment. The purpose of an appointment is the provision of leadership for congregational ministry. Leadership requires "followership". The congregation must be willing to follow pastoral leadership in order for effective congregational ministry to happen. Effective leadership elicits effective "followership".

CONGREGATIONAL PREPARATION FORUM

The Congregational Preparation Forum is a time, usually following Sunday morning worship, when the district superintendent, pastor parish relations committee, and at least one resource person meet with members of a congregation to discuss and prepare for a particular cross racial and/or cross cultural appointment. This meeting must be conducted in a positive and prayerful manner, beginning with a time of silent meditation and closing with prayer for the new pastor (and family), the congregation, and their ministry.

The Congregational Preparation Forum can be a time when questions are raised and answered, doubts expressed, hopes declared, ministry affirmed, grace discerned, and prayers offered. This usually works best when it happens after the appointment is announced. Some churches may choose to do it on the Sunday when the announcement is made while others may do it sometime thereafter.

ANNOUNCEMENT CELEBRATION

The announcement of a cross racial or cross cultural appointment must always be made in a celebrative atmosphere, especially in churches where this will be a first time experience. Concerns that the congregation may find ways to reject the appointment if it knew well in advance are really baseless when the congregation is ready for such appointments.

These fears will come true when there is no readiness. No cross racial and/or cross cultural appointment should be forced on an unwilling congregation. If the cabinet feels that it must insist on a particular appointment, it must inform the prospective pastor and ascertain his or her willingness to undertake the challenges of such decisions.

The announcement must be a part of the worship experience, not just a footnote to it. It is a special experience to most people hearing about their first cross racial and/or cross cultural pastor. It is appropriate that the liturgy for the worship be relevant, not oblivious, to this experience. The congregation may wish to celebrate the Covenant Service on the same day as the announcement.

COVENANT SERVICE

After the Congregational Preparation Forum is completed, a Covenant Service should be planned and conducted for the entire congregation. The Covenant Service will be a time when the congregation celebrates the grace of God and its affirmation of ministry. The Covenant Service should be planned by the district superintendent, the pastor parish relations committee, and the worship committee.

Depending on special considerations, the Covenant Service may be conducted either on the last Sunday with the out going pastor or on the first Sunday with the new pastor.

Things to consider in making this decision include, the needs of the out going pastor, the circumstance of the congregation, the disposition of the new pastor, and the judgment of the district superintendent. Concurrence among these four will help when planning a Covenant Service.

CHAPTER FOUR: THE BIG BEGINNING

First impression is always important. In some cases, first impression makes a lot of difference. Thus, the cross racial and/or cross cultural pastor must come into every new appointment with a clarity of purpose that succinctly offers the best possible self introduction to the congregation.

In a racist, sexist and materialist society such as ours, there are powerful stereotypes, entrenched traditions and unfair expectations always present in the congregation. It is necessary that the new appointment begins with a big reversal of most, if not all, of the stereotypes, traditions and expectations that are unfair. This will open the way and allow the curiosities of the people to look beyond their own limitations to an authentic reality. The "big beginning" theory allows for a honeymoon period during which the pastor and the people sort out their relationship, forge new understandings and establish terms of mutuality.

THE FIRST WEEK'S BUSINESS

The first week at a new appointment is critical in effectively countering deeply rooted assumptions while, at the same time, establishing new relationships and understandings. The pastor is at the center of these happenings. The pastor's family is also a part of the evolution of these circumstances.

The pastor's primary attention must be given to visitation (of the sick, elderly, and distressed), self-introduction, and interpersonal relationship building. This week must never be used for conflict resolution within the congregation. Conflicts can be handled later. Everyone must be seen and treated as special and worthy. The pastor should avoid stereotypes in the same manner that the congregation should avoid them. In every situation, the pastor must be a student, learning about people from themselves and helping them learn about the pastor and her or his family. It is important that the pastor becomes known first as a decent person with decent intentions and commitments in life.

Some people will try to warn the pastor about others in the congregation and/or community. Others will try to involve the pastor with on-going conflicts. Yet others will try to help the pastor see things in a particular way. Some may actually reject the pastor. The pastor must understand and affirm each person notwithstanding.

It is inappropriate for the pastor to take any stand on conflicting situations too early. The pastor's focus must always be on the affirmation of all persons regardless of their shortcomings. The pastor must not pretend to be perfect either. Rather, she or he must be simple, human, and faithful to God's will.

Finally, and most importantly, the pastor must never take sides on issues based on race, culture, or ethnicity. The pastor must intentionally avoid cliques and appearances of racism, sexism and culturalism. This does not mean that the pastor must lose her or his identity. It means that the pastor must respond to every situation, especially those that involve divisiveness, in holy ways. After all, the pastor's mission is to build an inclusive community where division and hatred are unwelcome. Responsible leadership requires that a pastor does not have to prove her or his identity by upholding injustice, but by affirming that which is holy.

The demeanor of the pastor must always be that of confidence and of courage. Pastors who enter cross-racial and cross-cultural appointments with apprehension and fear usually contribute as much to the problem as anybody else. The first week is for building solid relationships.

FIRST SUNDAY WORSHIP CELEBRATION

The first worship with the new pastor is a special time for the pastor (and family) and the congregation. It is also a special time for the whole denomination as God's people are being reconciled across racial and cultural lines. It is an opportunity for healing and nurture among the people. It is a time to sooth anxieties, calm fears, affirm hopes and praise God.

The pastor may be led by the Spirit of God to address the issues of grace, confession, repentance, forgiveness, salvation, community, reconciliation, or healing. The point of this worship experience is to deal effectively with the strong feelings present among the people and provide them with spiritual resources that encourage and comfort.

Music and liturgy must be upbeat and familiar in order to counter the feelings of unfamiliarity present. The sermon must deal with the issues of transition. Pastors must save their favorite sermons for another day. This day must be allowed to be what it is - - a day of new beginnings. The pastor and people must leave with a sense of fulfillment and assurance about the presence of God. Every effort must be made, by pastor and people, to avoid negatives. After all, neither pastor nor people know each other well.

THE HONEYMOON

People tend to receive change with some reservations. The reservations may be either good, bad or both. Each time, however, change must have a chance to introduce itself. In the introductory process, each new pastor or parish has the opportunity of destroying stereotypes and building up new understandings and relationships. This period of opportunity is called the honeymoon.

The length and effectiveness of the honeymoon depend on how and whether it is used. If the pastor or congregation does not use this time to build understandings and relationships, a danger is that stereotypes will assert themselves to a place of prominence in the new relationships. If, however, the pastor and congregation become proactive by establishing understandings and building relationships that are healthy and holy, chances are that the stereotypes will crumble and fall.

Long honeymoons are indicators of changes in the understandings and relationships within the congregation. Shorter honeymoons usually indicate failure at making changes in the the situation at hand. Failures happen when there is a choice to affirm the *status quo* rather than to make the sacrifices required for new understandings and relationships.

There are times when long honeymoons indicate a deliberate commitment to the establishment of new understandings and relationships, thereby prolonging a return to the *status quo ante*.

The honeymoon is an opportunity. It is an expression of goodwill that the pastor and people offer to each other. The pastor can end a honeymoon just as effectively as the people can. There are times when one may end the honeymoon while the other still keeps the door open. It is imperative that the pastor and congregation use the honeymoon to build up new understandings and relationships that will enhance ministry and build up the community of faith.

CULTURE SHOCKS

Culture shocks are real. They happen all the time when a person from a different background encounters a new and different way of life. Pastors experience these shocks every bit as much as congregations do. It is important that congregations and pastors know that their relationships and traditions offer surprises and shocks to outsiders.

When a pastor from one culture preaches for one hour and the congregation from yet another culture is offended at the insensitivity of a prolonged worship experience, it may not be a case of insensitivity as much as it is a case of either innocence or ignorance.

Racial and cultural competency, as prerequisites to effective cross racial and cross cultural appointments, are intended, among other things, to alleviate these kinds of negative situations. Pastors need to understand and appreciate the cultural and racial sensibilities of the congregations they serve and vice versa.

CHAPTER FIVE: REALITY CHECK

Honeymoons don't last forever. They last just long enough. Many congregations and pastors who do not understand this phenomenon consider their ministries ended when the honeymoon is over. Quite frankly, it is necessary for the honeymoon to end in order for practical ministry to begin.

WHEN HONEYMOON'S OVER

The end of the honeymoon indicates a maturity in initial relationships and mutual understandings. The congregation may now feel that it knows its pastor and understands what it has to do and how or whether it must be in the relationship. The pastor may feel that she or he has reached a good understanding of what this congregation is and whether or how she or he can lead it. This understanding may or may not be healthy. However, it signals the need for the next steps in the relationship.

One of the most frequent temptations (and mistakes) in times like these is when either the pastor or congregation tries to restore the honeymoon by trying antics that will not work. The proper response to the end of a honeymoon is to embrace the future which is being born in the midst of the passing of the honeymoon. Only in the embrace of that which follows the honeymoon, can the grace of God be fully experienced in ministry.

THE FUTURE BEGINS

With the end of the honeymoon comes the birth of the future. In other words, the birth of the future is really where the "rubber hits the road". It is here that the congregation and the pastor test out the understandings and relationships they have eatablished. It is here that the ministries of the church are engaged. It is here that the congregation and pastor really respond to the challenges and opportunities of ministry.

This is probably the most critical juncture in the life of the relationship. Here, the congregation and the pastor may find their compatibility or their incompatibility for ministry. Here the congregation determines its priorities and commitments. Here, after the honeymoon, practice of ministry really begins. This is the place where every cross racial or cross cultural pastor and congregation want to be. If the congregation and pastor cannot come to this place together, the relationship cannot mature and ministry cannot effectively happen.

HURDLES TO CROSS

As the future begins, various hurdles, challenges and opportunities unfold. In the best case *scenario*, when pastor and congregation are in harmony, these hurdles are encountered together as one community of faith in ministry.

However, when the pastor and congregation are in an unhealthy relationship, the hurdles will further exarcerbate the situation and weaken the overal witness of the congregation. It is at this point, the end of a bad honeymoon and the beginning of the future, when the cabinet must intervene in the appointment process. A bad relationship between pastor and people must not be allowed to continue because it destroys the pastor (and family), the congregation, and the ministries of the church.

In a healthy pastor-to-people relationship, there may be a lot of tension. Creative tension is always present in the life and ministries of the church. Creative tension happens when the church struggles actively with issues of faith and witness. Destructive tension happens when the church struggles with issues of personality and control. Creative tension must not be a cause for cabinet intervention.

In cross racial and cross cultural appointments, creative tension is prevalent. The prevalence of tension in cross racial and cross cultural appointments is primarily due to adjustments of behaviors, beliefs, relationships, and priorities within the congregation. Adjustments to leadership and worship styles, preaching and teaching methods, and evangelization and stewardship strategies are certain to arouse creative tension within the congregtion. The emergence of this kind of tension must be anticipated and embraced as a sign of maturity and coming of age.

When the congregation comes of age, it will be on the verge of the fulfillment of Christ's command to the disciples to "make disciples of all nations". The congregation will also be ready to allow the bishop and cabinet to be freer in the appointment making process. The more congregations and pastors who can come to understandings and relationships that are nonprohibitive to effective ministry, the more inclusive our churches will become as people of various backgrounds are brought to the love and knowledge of God.

SUPPORT THERAPY

The United Methodist Church is still in its infancy when it comes to matters of inclusiveness, notwithstanding the relative infancy of other denominations in America. No matter how well a cross racial and/or cross cultural appointment goes, it is always necessary to provide continuing support to pastors, their families, and congregations involved in this pioneering enterprise. Healthy relationships do not always come easily. They may come by way of sacrifices and pains.

When relationships fail, neither the pastor nor the congregation must be ridiculed. Instead, support therapy must be provided to heal the wounds. A child, trying to walk on the first day of birth, fails. As the days and weeks go by, it becomes possible for the child to walk in the nurture of a mother's care. The hope that is kept alive in a child causes the child never to give up trying until it finally walks.

The greatest day of life is the day when a goal becomes a reality or when dreams come true. To experience the joy of inclusiveness, the Church needs to keep trying until, by God's grace, it reaches the goal and the dreams come true.

The Church must affirm those who fail to make it along the way. It must help them know that it has confidence in them and that they will succeed someday. Cross racial and cross cultural appointments are like children trying to walk. Our obligation is response to God's call to this ministry.

CHAPTER SIX: THE DOs AND THE DON'Ts

Cross racial and cross cultural appointments have their share of dos and don'ts. Whenever people of different backgrounds, antagonistic histories and diverse experiences come together, there are certain behaviors and thought patterns that are prohibited for the sake of mutual respect and healthy relationships. Take a look at these suggestions. They will help you in a cross racial and/or cross cultural appointment.

THE TEN DON'Ts

Let us begin with the negatives. When you enter a cross racial and/or cross cultural appointment, whether you are a pastor, district superintendent, bishop, or lay person, it is imperative that you take the following ten suggestions seriously. By intentionally avoiding these pitfalls, you will allow the situation to be healthier for all and open for healing and vitality.

1. DON'T UNDERESTIMATE ANY ONE.

When people feel underestimated they become defensive and unwilling to relate freely to others. Underestimation is one of the perversions of a racist society and should have no place in a healthy cross racial and cross cultural situation.

2. DON'T ASSUME YOU HAVE ALL THE ANSWERS.

When you behave as though you have all the answers, you create division between yourself and others, who, by virtue of your pretense, are made to feel that their contributions are not needed.

3. DON'T MAKE RACIAL JOKES.

Racial jokes can easily be misunderstood by persons who do not trust you. Our society has abused racial jokes in ways that humiliate and intimidate others. It is difficult for people to accept jokes in the way you may intend.

4. DON'T RELY ON MAJORITY VOTE ALONE.

Majority vote does not always settle matters of grave concern to people of diverse racial or ethnic backgrounds. It is important to know that democracy can become majoritarianism when the majority disregards the basic needs and interests of the minorities by using majority vote as an excuse for its indifference and hostility.

5. DON'T INSIST THAT EVERYTHING CONFORM TO YOUR WAY.

Traditionally power has been used to compel others into conformity. Remember that Christians are not to be conformed to this world, but transformed, by the renewing of their minds. Be willing to accept the needs of others.

6. DON'T POINT FINGERS.

Remember that whenever you point one finger at the other person, at least three fingers are pointing back to you. Finger pointing destroys relationships.

7. DON'T GRUMBLE ABOUT EVERYTHING YOU DISLIKE.

Because your experiences are limited, there will always be some good things that you do not like. Learn to rejoice with those who rejoice. In so doing, you prepare them to rejoice with you in due season.

8. DON'T BE FUNDAMENTALIST ABOUT EVERYTHING.

Remember that God, who alone has the ultimate right and power to be a totalitarian, would rather see us freely go to hell than compel us to go to heaven. Only God knows everything. Remember that your deepest personal convictions could be faulty in the eyes of God.

9. DON'T BE A TRADITIONALIST ABOUT EVERYTHING.

Remember that tradition is the living religion of the dead and traditionalism is the dead religion of the living. Allow yourself to be made alive to the unfloding realities around you. Other people have their traditions too. It ain't over till God says it's over.

10. DON'T BE AFRAID.

Fear causes of insecurity. Allow the grace of God to protect you and give you courage and confidence. When you are afraid, it will be difficult for people to know and trust you.

THE TEN DOs

It is not helpful to be silent and inactive in a cross racial and/or cross cultural appointment just for the purpose of avoiding offense. It is more helpful to contribute to the building of healthy understanding and relationships among all. The following ten things will help you in your proactive engagement with others.

1. TREAT EVERYONE WITH RESPECT

Respect for everyone is always the best policy, even when you do not know the people you respect. There is an unalienable right of all persons to respect because God made us all. Even the vilest offender deserves the atoning blood of Jesus Christ on the cross.

2. ALWAYS BE HUMBLE

It is in humility that Jesus saved the world. Humility allows us to be more readily available to the leading of the Holy Spirit than pride or arrogance. Humility invites others, especially the vulnerable, to join in covenant with us.

3. PRAISE OTHERS

If you want to build understanding and covenantal relationships with people of diverse backgrounds, always praise the positive characteristics and contributions of others. By so doing, you will compel them to become positive toward you, others and God.

4. BE INCLUSIVE

Covenantal relationships are built on trust and inclusiveness. Our covenantal relationship to God is built on our trust in Christ and our inclusion into the Body of Christ. Likewise, we must always think, plan, act, and be inclusive in everything. This way, our relationships will become trustworthy and strong.

5. BE SENSITIVE

Always remember that God is being revealed, not only in your experience, but also in the experiences of others. God may be speaking to you through the experiences of others. Therefore, value and seek out the contributions of others. By so doing, you encourage them to value and seek out your contributions.

6. FOCUS ON SOLUTIONS

When things go wrong, identify the problems and look for ways to resolve them. By keeping your focus on solutions, you create a solution based, rather than a finger pointing, community. The purpose of community is mutuality, not perfection.

7. BE GRACIOUS

When things are not going your way, always remember that things have not always gone God's way either. Be gracious and know that God is always more gracious to you than you can ever be in return. Graciousness allows those who fall to get up and confidently try again.

8. TRUST GOD

Sometimes Christians want to take a stand on everything. Trust God in everything and stand up only when the integrity of faith is at stake.

9. LOOSEN UP

God is still in control. You do not have to manage everything. Remember that God would not take such a risk. God requires faithfulness, not uniformity.

10. BE OF GOOD COURAGE

Stand up for what is right. Let your actions create justice and your faith elicit community. God has a mission for you at this particular time in your life. Always know that God loves you even when you forget.

CHAPTER SEVEN: CONCLUSION

Cross racial and cross cultural appointments are a representation of God's divine act of reconciliation through Jesus Christ. When the Church gathers in its diversity, it represents the God who creates diversity. When the Church struggles to be inclusive, it affirms the inclusiveness of Jesus Christ. When the Church dares to defy the limits of intolerance, it glorifies the omnipotent God. When the Church faithfully seeks alternatives to worldly hostilities, it praises God from whom all blessings flow.

Hostile human histories and traditions stand in need of divine relief. Practical transitions from hostility, indifference and fear can be difficult, especially when one lives in a society where the status quo induces hostility, indifference and fear. The Church will meet with increasing resistance from the secular world as it seeks inclusiveness.

Notwithstanding these obstacles, the Church is called to faithfulness and to service. Ours is the ministry of reconciliation which, in Christ, God makes possible and available to all. By claiming our reconciliation to God through Jesus Christ, the Church also reconciles people to each other and makes visible the connection we share as children of God.

SAMPLE SERMONS

"HOW SHALL WE SING THE LORD'S SONG?"

"By the rivers of Babylon, there we sat down and wept, when we remembered Zion. On the willows there, we hung up our harps. For there our captors required of us songs, and our tormentors, mirth, saying, 'Sing us one of the songs of Zion!' How shall we sing the Lord's song in a strange land?" *[Psalms 137:1-4]*

Let us pray:

God of our weary years, God of our silent tears, thou who hast brought us thus far on the way; thou who hast by thy might led us into the light, keep us forever in the path, we pray; and may the words of my mouth, and the meditations of all our hearts, be acceptable in thy sight, O Jesus, our Savior and Lord! Amen!

How shall we sing the Lord's song in this strange land? The children of Israel wallowing in tears, were posted by the rivers of Babylon, in a strange land, a great distance away from their motherland. They had been savagely uprooted, as prisoners of war, and brought into slavery in the land of Babylon.

The land of Babylon was now a house of bondage, as Egypt had been in their past. Their conquerors placed them on 'reservations' and in 'ghettos' by the riverside and designed these quarters to employ their labor. We find some of them living by the river Chebar and others along the great river of Babylon, the Euphrates.

There, along the rivers, they sat down, after long hours of labor, to indulge their grief, sooth their miseries, heal their souls, and imagine their hopes. They just could not live from misery to misery without some time to pray and meditate and have some peace, if you know what I mean. Peace of mind and peace of spirit are so critical to the health of a any people who are treated like slaves. And all these people wanted, in their situation, was some time to just have a little talk with Jesus.

But, every good slave master always comes up with something to break the spirit and dash the hopes of the slave. This was the experience of the children of Israel along the rivers of Babylon. Every time they gathered by the river among themselves to pray and meditate and reflect;...the master would show up just in time to mess things up.

They would gather, tired from the days labor, and begin to share their nightmarish experiences and their glorious memories. Their memories were now limited -- limited because some of them had never seen or been to the motherland, they were now children of Babylon by birth. Others had forgotten many details about the motherland because of the immense pressure and cultural teachings of the Kingdom of Babylon. Babylon had done everything possible to destroy their sense of dignity and of nobility. Babylon was teaching them that they were always slaves and criminals and liars and parasites who needed a good master to help them become something good.

Babylon was teaching them that there was no greatness in their past, that their ancestors were primitive and useless to themselves, that their cultures were barbaric and uncivilized, that they had been brought to Babylon out of Babylon's own sense of humanity and philanthropy for the needy, and that they were not as civilized as the Babylonians. Babylon was trying desperately to break their spirit.

Every time the children of Israel would gather by the rivers to think, and feel, and reason, and reflect, and pray for themselves, their Babylonian captors and tormentors would interrupt their meditations in mockery by making weird requests: "Sing for us your songs. Sing us one the the songs of Zion".

This request was weird...because the songs of Zion are the songs of joy, glory, praise, and victory, not songs of gloom, pain, and vengeance. The songs of Zion are the songs of the place from which Solomon brings the ark of the covenant. Zion is Israel, the people of God. The songs of Zion are songs of God's spiritual Kingdom, the Eternal City, new Jerusalem, and heaven.

No matter why the Israelites could not understand how they could be expected to sing the songs of Zion in such a strange land! You see, Babylon was a strange kingdom. It's leaders were so wicked, they ranked first in the category of human savagery. Built by King Nimrod and once the capital of Assyria, Babylon became the greatest military power under King

Nebuchadnezzar. In its architectural magnificence, Babylon was surrounded by wide walls and large gates. Its god was not the Almighty God. Babylon's god was the idol, Bel. Its inhabitants were idolatrous, sacrilegious and enslaved by magic.

Babylon was a gambling city. People took their chances at making it big any which way possible. It was in Babylon that the Tower of Babel was built to magnify man and to preserve the unity and prosperity of the Babylonian race. Babylon was a racist city. Its commitment to racial supremacy led to the forcible and frequent overrunning of its neighbors to maintain its control, destroy cultures, resist competttition, and subdue kingdoms. Babylon was a superpower. Its military might was feared throughout the ancient world. In Babylon, the Israeli children were in hell.

Babylon ain't too far from here either! There just might be a Babylon around the corner. This society meets several of the requirements of Babylon. African people did not come here on a Mayflower. The last time I checked my history, African people came here on a slave ship. They did not come by their own choice. They were brought as prisoners of war to be slaves in America. They were not intended, by the founding fathers, to be free. Their prescribed and intended place was in the tobacco fields of North Carolina, in the sugar fields of Cuba, in the motor fields of Michigan, Illinois and Ohio, in the gold fields of California, in the oil fields of Texas, in the cotton fields of Mississippi, and in the cocaine fields of the inner cities.

The Book of Psalms tells us that these children of Israel gathered by the rivers of Babylon to reflect and meditate. The problem with us today, as African children in America, is that some of us have been so broken that we no longer join our brothers and sisters to gather by the river of meditation so that the balm in Gilead can cleanse our weary souls. Rather, we are caught up in the master's fields of misery and sin, and no longer have time for reflection and meditation. And those of us who take time to reflect and meditate know how often the master interrupts us with the noise of mockery: Sing for us the songs of Zions! Sing for us the songs of Africa! Sing!

But how shall we sing the Lord's song? Shall we sing it anyway and any where, and any how we can? How shall we sing the songs of Zion -- the songs of Africa in this strange land? If the land does not feel and smell strange to you, you have a serious identity problem. How can a descendant of Africa, where the extended family structures and nurtures every living soul, be at home in a place like this? A place where family values and dignity are so openly rejected; where the kingdom of God is treated with disrespect and the temples of worship desecrated? How shall we sing? How?

The children of Israel had already responded to their own question by hanging up their harps on the willow trees. With tears in their eyes, sorrow in their hearts, grief in their lives, and anxieties in their remembrance, they hung up their harps. They laid to rest their instruments of melody and harmony. They laid down their sounds of joy and celebration.

They put their hopes and aspirations in suspense. They postponed their rejoicing and extended their anticipation of glory. They put the promises of God on hold. In so doing, they did not hide their harps in the bushes or destroy them totally, they just placed them on hold. And they did so in a way that allowed their harps to be in full view, so that they were constantly reminded of the deplorable conditions of their lives and of their hope for a better day.

Therefore, I have good news for each and every person in this congregation today. I have been sent to tell, Conant, "When the odds of life are stacked up against you, no matter what the cause; when your life is on the edge and you feel like giving up and giving in, Don't give up! God is not finished with you yet! Keep hope alive! Don't throw away your identity. You are of God, created with greatness and established by the power and grace of God. This hope enabled the suffering slaves of Babylon to keep their harps secure.

Secure for the day when their joy will be restored. Secure for the day when the joy of the Lord will be their strength. Secure in the assurance of liberation even when the odds are all stacked up against you. Secure because of the deeply-rooted faith that tells us that it ain't over till God says it's over. Secure in the redemptive assurance that God will not leave you to face challenges which God has not prepared you for. Secure in the Spirit of a God who helps God's children always and everywhere to sing with harmony and melody the great songs of liberation, the songs of Zion!

O how sweet it is to believe in and belong to a God whose nature it is to born within every restless heart and troubled soul the melodies and harmonies of the symphony of salvation!

Therefore, as Babylon had no power over the spirits of the Israeli slaves, we too can stand up, in the midst of our troubled lives, to declare our hope in a God who is mighty and whose will it is that we might be free. So, Conant, let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid. Instead...

Lift every voice and sing, till earth and heaven ring,
ring with the harmonies of liberty.
Let our rejoicing rise, high as the listening skies,
let it resound loud as the rolling sea.

Stony the road we trod, bitter the chastening rod,
felt in the days when hope unborn had died;
Yet with a steady beat, have not our weary feet,
come to the place for which our fathers sighed?

God of our weary years, God of our silent tears,
thou who hast brought us thus far on the way;
Thou who hast by thy might, led us into the light,
Keep us forever in the path, we pray. AMEN!

GRACE HAS COME: It's Free, But Not Cheap

Scripture: Hebrews 11:29- 12:2 TEXT: Hebrews 12:1-2

> "Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight and the sin that clings so closely, and let us run with perseverence the race that is set before us, looking to Jesus the pioneer and perfecter of our faith, who for the sake of the joy that was set before him endured the the cross, disregarding its shame, and has taken his seat at the right hand of the throne of God".

We live in a world where everything seems to come with its price tag. Recently we received a mailing in which we were offered a free trip to the Bahamas and Disney World in Florida, with three nights of accomodation covered. The offer required us to visit and see the facilities at an estate near Disney. The bottom line was that they were selling shares. It seems you can't get anything these days for nothing.

You may be surprised today when I come to tell you that there is something in this world that comes without a price tag. It comes as a free gift from God and showers its blessings upon all who freely accept it for themselves.

You don't have to be born in a certain family to have access to it. It's not in one's family tree or pedigree. It's free, but not cheap.

Cheap means costing little; of little importance or value; requiring little, if any, effort. I always see people who want something for nothing; they want things cheap.

The Book of Hebrews tells us the stories of those who have given so much. They gave themselves, even unto death, so that we may have something free.

So many people think that free grace means cheap grace. But I come to tell you today, Grace is free, but not cheap. Diettrich Bonhoeffer, the German martyr of the Christian faith, has something to say about this argument.

Bonhoeffer said, cheap grace is preaching on forgiveness without requiring repentance. In other words, you have to open yourself up to God.

Cheap grace is baptism without church discipline. In other words, it doesn't matter how many times or in what manner you are baptized, it is the way you walk and the way you talk. There's got to be some discipline about it.

Cheap grace is communion without confession. We've got to open up and be honest with ourselves and with the Lord as we come to the altar of Grace.

Cheap grace is grace without discipleship, grace without Jesus Christ, and grace without the cross. It is absolution without a personal confession. I don't know about these folk who are going around and telling folk to just give me your hand and live any way you like. You've got to be born again. If you think you are saved only by joining the Church, you are fooling yourself. You've got to be born again.

Bonhoeffer went on to say that it is under this kind of influence - this cheap grace theory - that the world has called the Church into question. The world is saying to the Church, "What are you all about? Who is your God? You ought to be different than us."

You see, Emmanuel, free grace means more than living in the world, and acting like the world, and being a part of the world. The apostle is calling on the Hebrew children to undertake faithfully the responsibilities of salvation through grace.

He is urging the Hebrews first to lay aside every weight and the sin that clings so closely. So that they may not come to church on Sunday and sing in the choir, preach from the pulpit, serve on the board, teach Sunday school, go home and raise hell all week long. We've got to live the life that we sing about; we've got to walk the walk and talk the talk.

I'm talking about God's grace. God's grace. The world is calling the Church into accountability. We cannot leave the Church on Sunday morning and do and live however we want to live. When God's grace is active in your life and working within you, there's got to be a difference.

Gideon was raised up by God's grace to deliver his people from the oppression of the Midianites. Barak obtained a great victory by his faith over all the host of Sisera.

Samson, though with many failings in his own life, was enabled by God's grace to use his strength to the glory of God. Jephthah, the son of a harlot, was used by God to do great things. David, the man after God's own heart, overcame great trials and became a leader of God's people. Samuel, as a little boy, was raised up by God's grace to become a prophet and leader of his people.

By their faith they subdued kingdoms, represented righteousness, obtained promises, quenched violence, escaped the edge of the sword, turned weakness into strength, became valiant in faith, and put to flight the armies of evil.

Therefore, let us lay aside every weight and the sin that clings so closely.

Not only that, we must also run with patience the race that is set before us. There were two friends in Liberia. One friend was running for public office and asked his friend, who was chief of the tribe to support him. The chief agreed and promised to support his friend. On the day of the vote, the two candidates stood on an open field and supporters were asked to stand behind the candidate of their choice. The chief went and stood behind his friend as he had promised, but all his tribespeople went to the other side and stood behind the opposing candidate. Needless to say, the opposing candidate won the vote.

It is not sufficient when we say that we love and believe in Jesus while, at the same time, our actions encourage others to seek alternatives to Jesus. We must realize that this is a race we are in.

Christians have a race to run! It is a race against time; a race against principalities and powers; against sin and evil; against alienation and indifference; and a race against cheap grace. We have a great cloud, a mighty sea of witnesses who have run this race before our time and whose faithfulness reminds us about the need for our own faithfulness today.

This race requires a special quality of running. It requires patience and perserverance. Some folk will run with patience but not with perserverance. The race is not only meant to be run, it is also meant to be won. Therefore, every person who hears my voice this morning, must come to accept the urgency and imperative of this race for himself or herself today.

One of the marks of a great runner is the ability to keep focused on the finish line (the goal) and to pull up to it in time, regardless of any obstacles that may stand in the way. You cannot win a race by stopping to deal with every hindrance along the way. Distractions will always be there for the Church, but our focus must be always upon Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith.

With eyes fixed on Jesus, we too, like him, will be enabled to endure the contradiction of sin and righteousness, to overcome the cross of crucifixion, and to despise its shame for the sake of the glory of God.

Jesus endured everything that stood in his way because of the joy that was set before him. He kept his eyes fixed on the joy, making the trials and tribulations along the way seem as nothing is comparison. You see, salvation is not something we can have on a Sunday morning for one or two hours.

I come to let you know, brothers and sisters, if the Church is going to have a rebirth, an outpouring of the power of God, a renewal, the presence of the Holy Spirit;...IF.....we are going to bring about the transformation the world now craves, we've got to go back to the old rugged cross, where we first received the Lord and gained our sight. We've got to be serious and intentional about our discipleship, our confession, our discipline, our commitment, and our faithfulness.

Bonheoffer said that cheap grace is Christianity without a commitment. The reason the Church is being scorned and put down is that too many people are practising cheap grace. Too many of us go around and are not ambassodors of our Christ. Jesus Christ needs our hands, our feet, and our lives to give the glory to God.

Cheap grace will get us nowhere, THEREFORE, let us consider God's Genuine Grace; God's prevenient grace; God's Amazing Grace! It's free, but not cheap.

The cloud of witnesses could not make it on cheap grace. They had to have something more, something different, they had to know that God was indeed Yahweh; that God was the God of their faith; that God was the God who brought them out of bondage - the God of their deliverance, who stood by their side in their times of need. We need to be able to say, "Grace, has brought me safe thus far".

Salvation is free, but it cost somebody something. It cost God God's on begotten Son. An African Christian, following the death of his teenage son, had been absent from worship and other church activities for three months. The church evangelist visited him and asked him to return to Church and receive the blessings of the fellowship of believers. The evangelist told him that he would not heal alone, that he needed the support, prayers, friendship, fellowship, communion, and relationships of the Church family. "But", the man asked, "where was God when my son died?" The evangelist replied, "God was in the same place God was when God's Son died!"

Oh how I came to tell you, my brothers and sisters of Emmanuel Church, that God so loved the world that it cost God something to redeem it. It cost Jesus a suspension of his divine authority, his divine power, he became flesh, lived in

this world, and was rejected. He came down from heaven and rode on the back of a donkey, becoming a servant so that we can sit in heavenly places. If it hadn't been for the power of God, you and I would have still been lost in sin, but thanks be unto God. Grace has brought me safe thus far.

Jesus paid a price. He gave it all up, including his own life, so that we might have something worth living for. He gave so much that we may have something free! On the cross, he was so ugly, so beaten, so bruised, so tormented, so despised, and so rejected. It cost him something!

And finally, it cost Jesus his life! Grace reached down into the center of the universe and Grace picked me up and picked you up, and turned us around.

The altar is open today. As we come to it, come in grace, not only to offer your money and your prayers, but to offer your own life to the service of our gracious Lord.

Because Jesus ran the race with patience and perserverance, and gave all he had and all he was, he has been raised up by Grace and has taken his seat at the right hand of the throne of God.

Grace gave us a new name! Grace gave us a new testimony! Grace gave us a new will! Grace gave us a new life! Grace gave us a new hope! Grace has come! Grace has set me free! Grace will guide me! It's free, but not cheap!

TABLES

MAP OF THE MICHIGAN AREA
THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

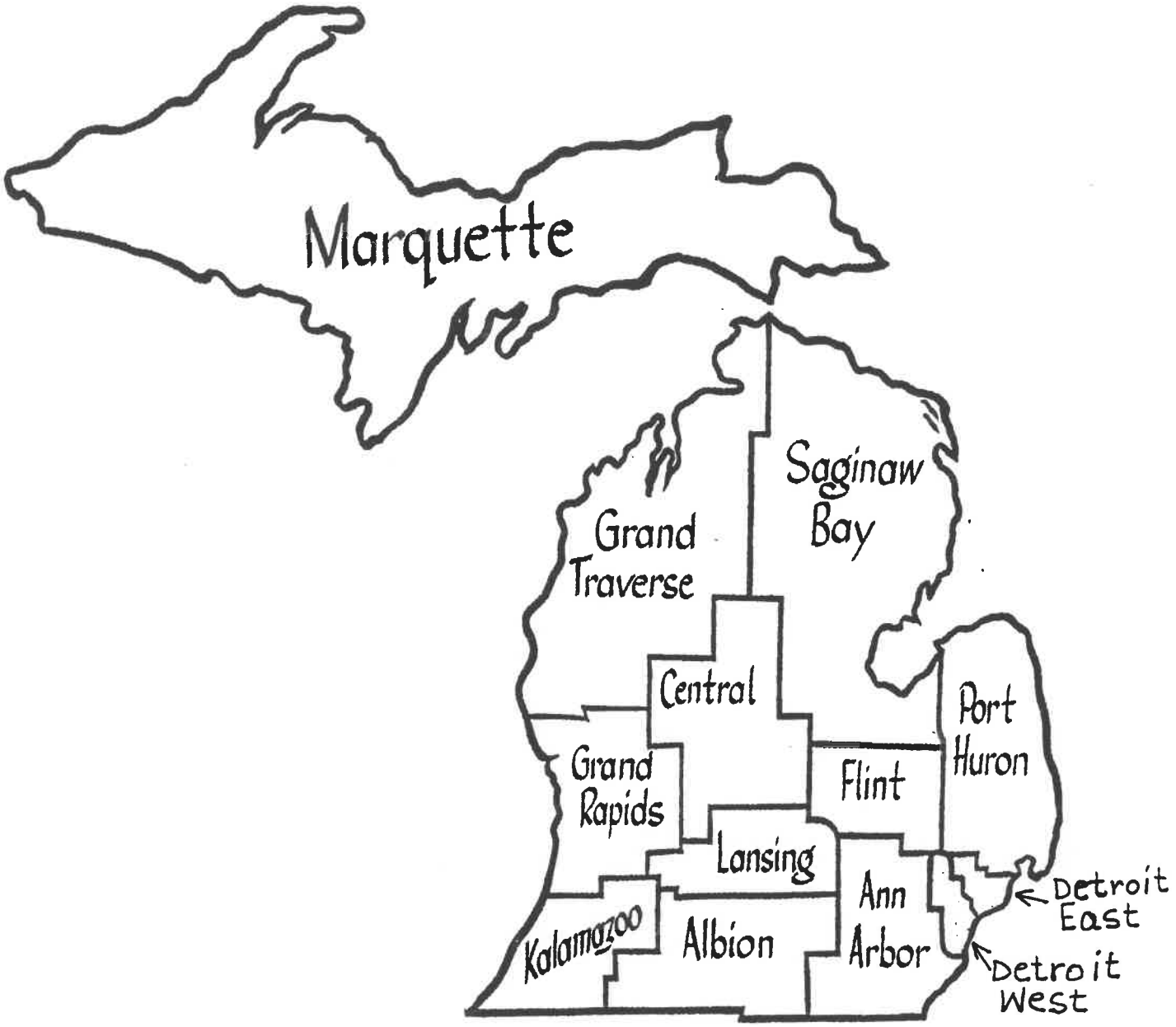


TABLE 1

CROSS RACIAL AND CROSS CULTURAL APPOINTMENTS MICHIGAN AREA

Personal Information

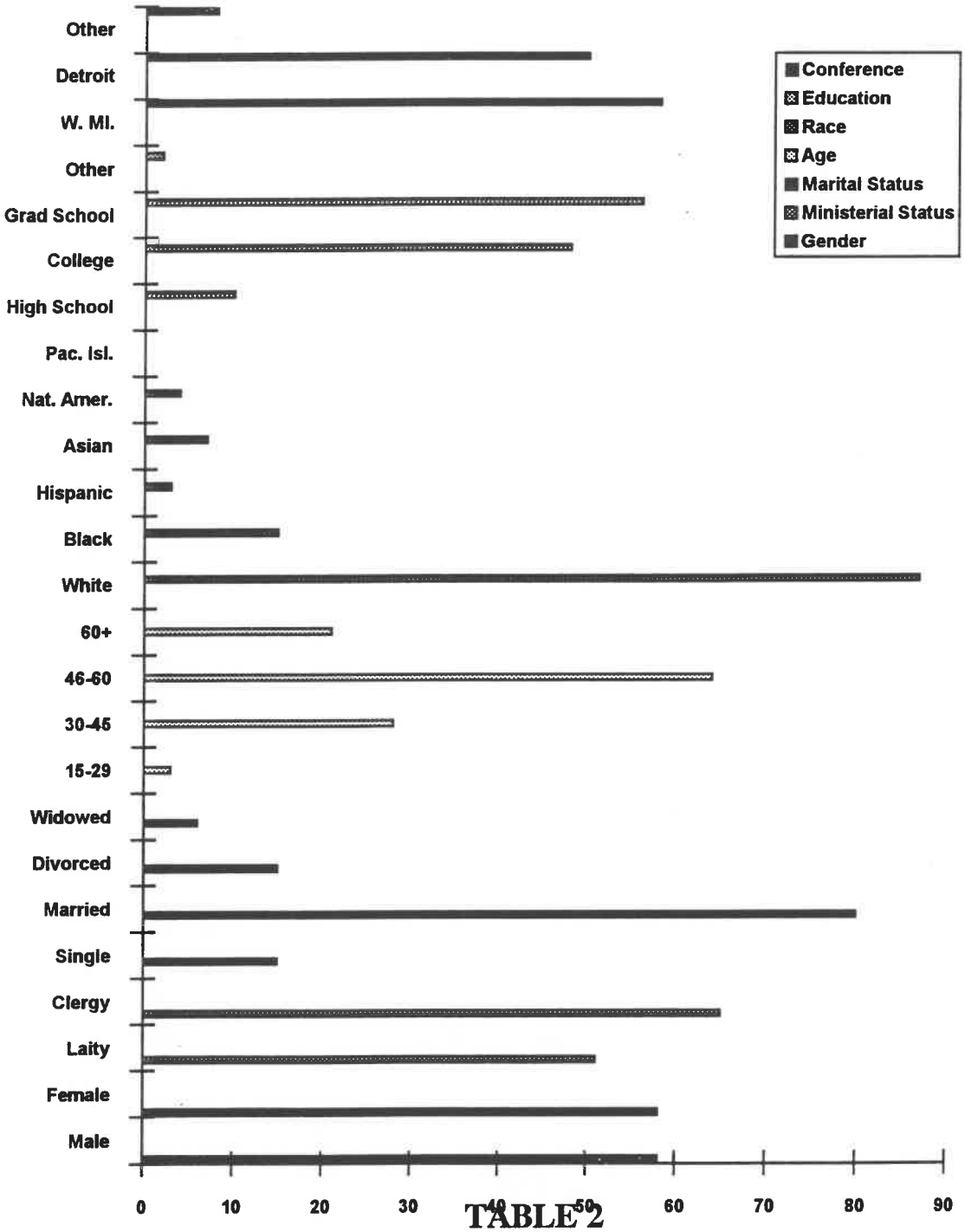
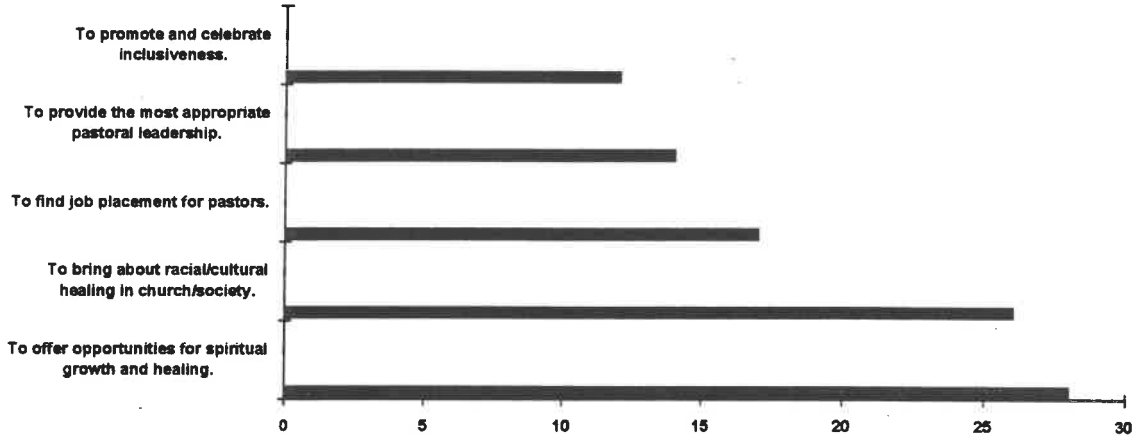


TABLE 2

CROSS RACIAL AND CROSS CULTURAL APPOINTMENTS MICHIGAN AREA

What are the purposes of cross racial/cross cultural appointments?

Pre-Test Results



Post-Test Results

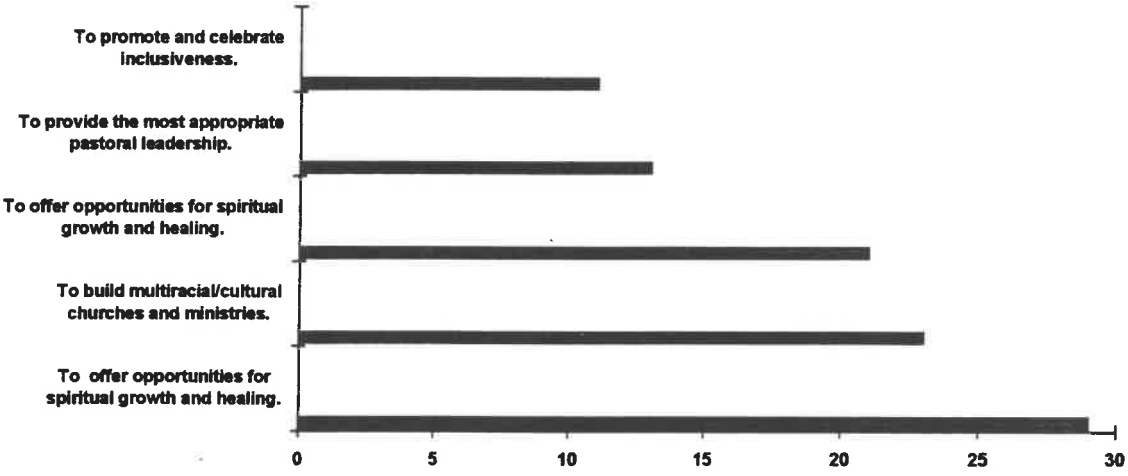
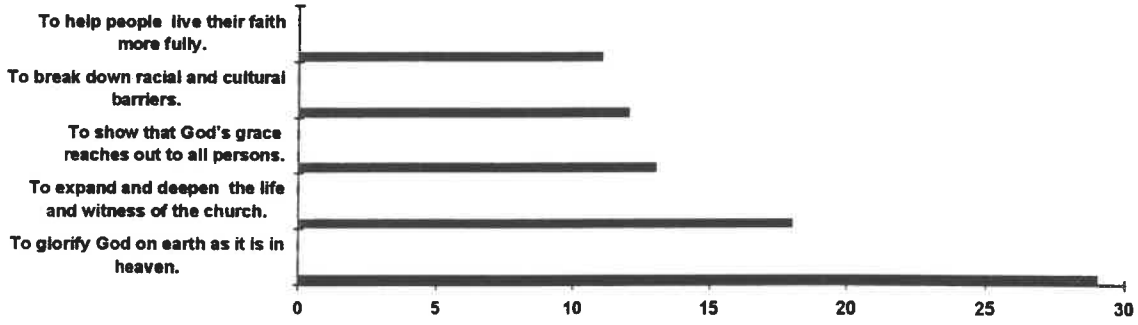


TABLE 3

CROSS RACIAL AND CROSS CULTURAL APPOINTMENTS MICHIGAN AREA

What are the goals of cross racial/cross cultural ministries?

Pre-Test Results


To help people live their faith more fully.
To break down racial and cultural barriers.
To show that God's grace reaches out to all persons.
To expand and deepen the life and witness of the church.
To glorify God on earth as it is in heaven.
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Post-Test Results

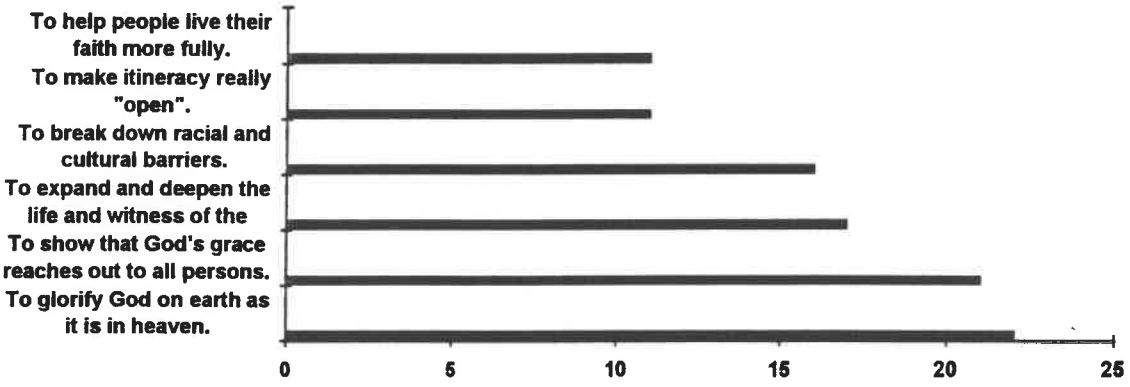
To help people live their faith more fully.
To make itineracy really "open".
To break down racial and cultural barriers.
To expand and deepen the life and witness of the
To show that God's grace reaches out to all persons.
To glorify God on earth as it is in heaven.
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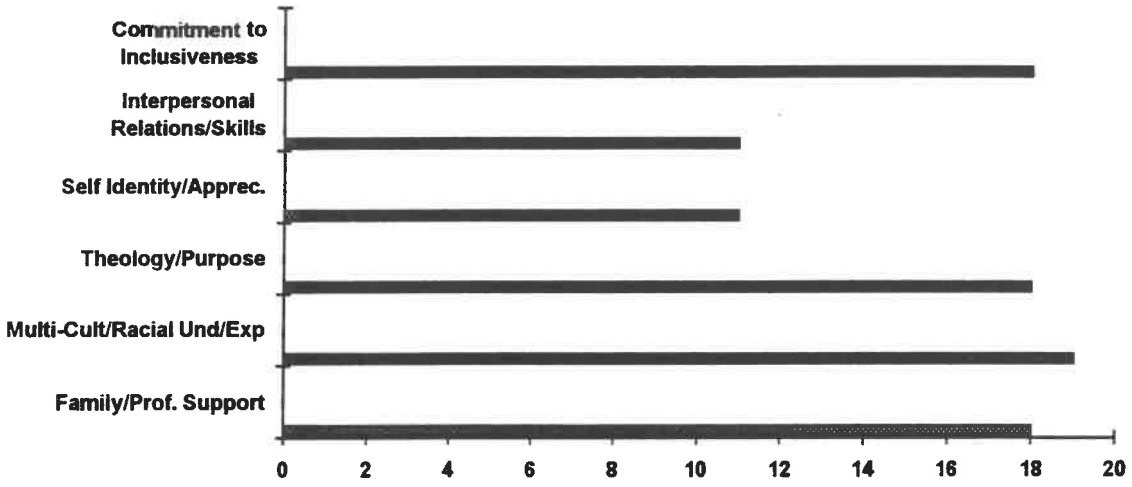
TABLE 4

CROSS RACIAL AND CROSS CULTURAL APPOINTMENTS MICHIGAN AREA

What are the five most important needs of a pastor in a cross racial and/or cross cultural appointment?

Pre-Test Results



Post-Test Results

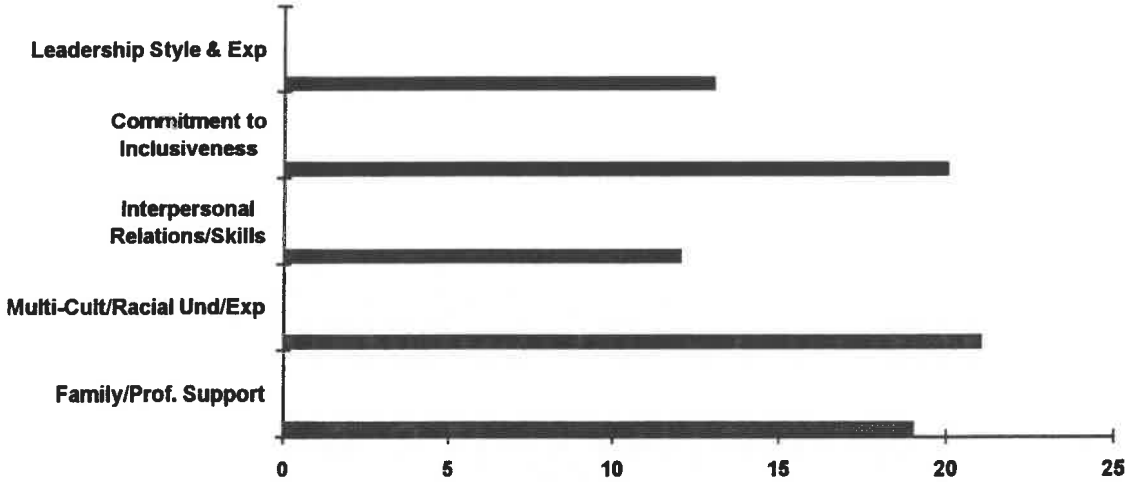
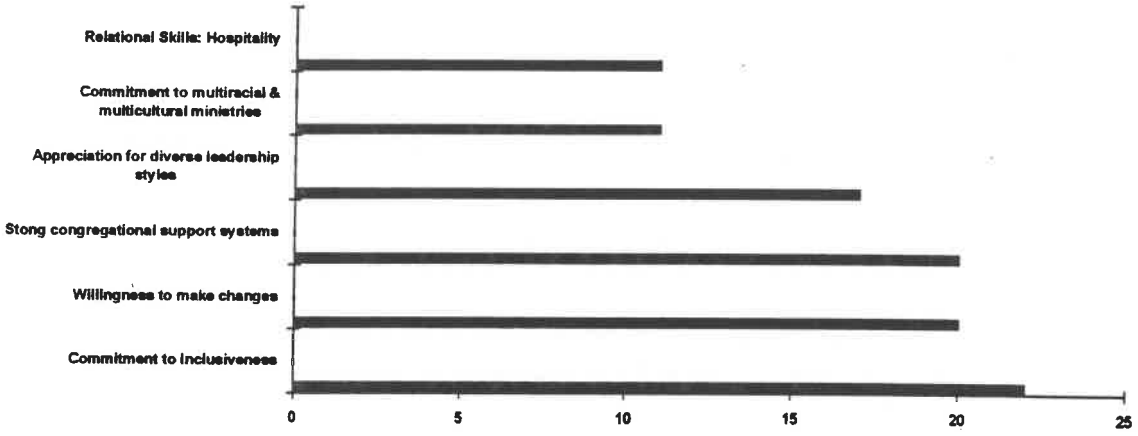


TABLE 5

CROSS RACIAL AND CROSS CULTURAL APPOINTMENTS MICHIGAN AREA

What are the five most important needs of a congregation experiencing a cross racial and/or cross cultural appointment?

Pre-Test Results



Post-Test Results

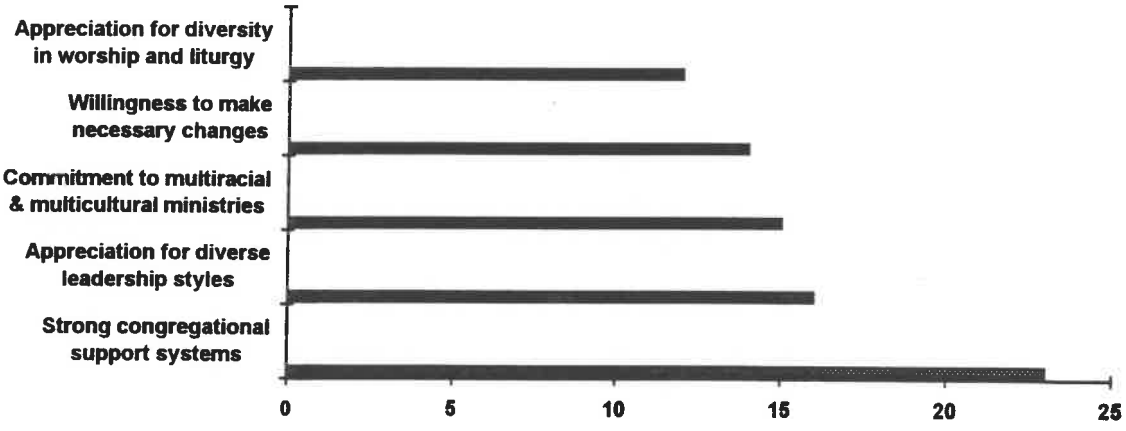
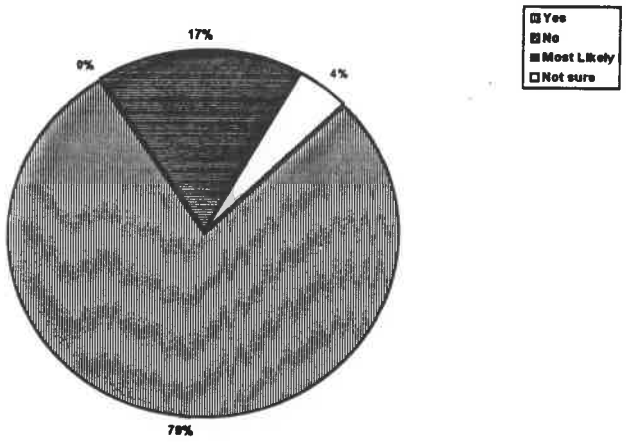


TABLE 6

CROSS RACIAL AND CROSS CULTURAL APPOINTMENTS MICHIGAN AREA

Question 26 a (Pre-Test) Results

The Workshop will help me explore cross racial and cross cultural appointments.



Question 26 b (Post-Test) Results

The Workshop helped me explore cross racial and cross cultural appointments.

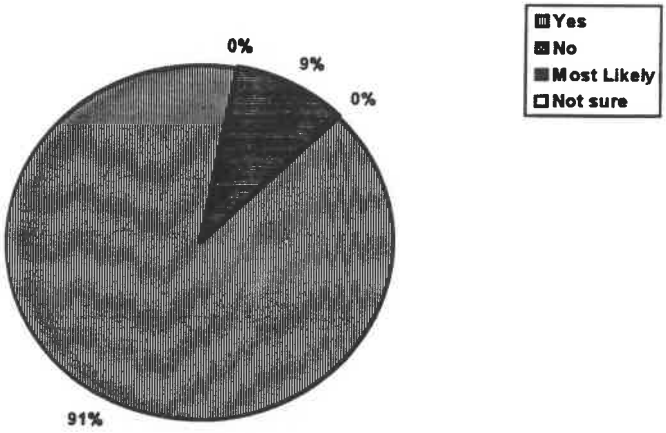
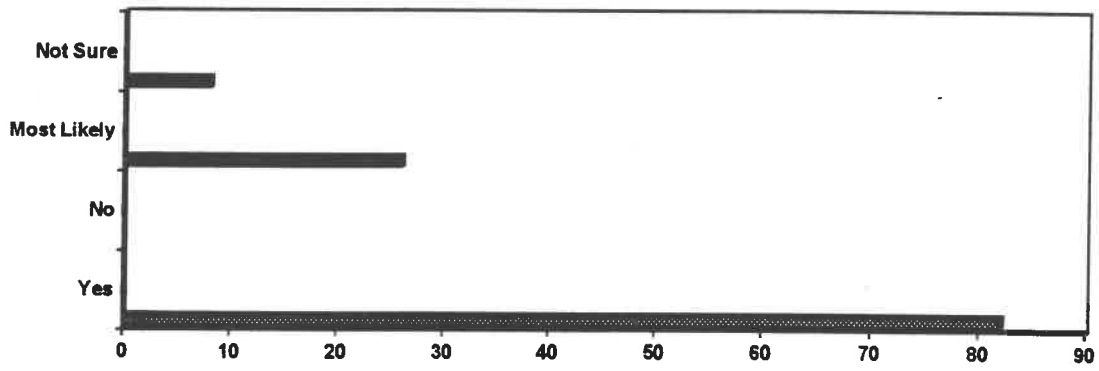


TABLE 7

CROSS RACIAL AND CROSS CULTURAL APPOINTMENTS MICHIGAN AREA

Question 27 a (Pre-Test) Results

The Workshop will encourage and/or support my desire for and/or my experience with cross racial and cross cultural appointments and ministries.



Question 27 b (Post Test) Results

The Workshop encouraged and/or supported my desire for and/or my experience with cross racial and cross cultural appointments and ministries.

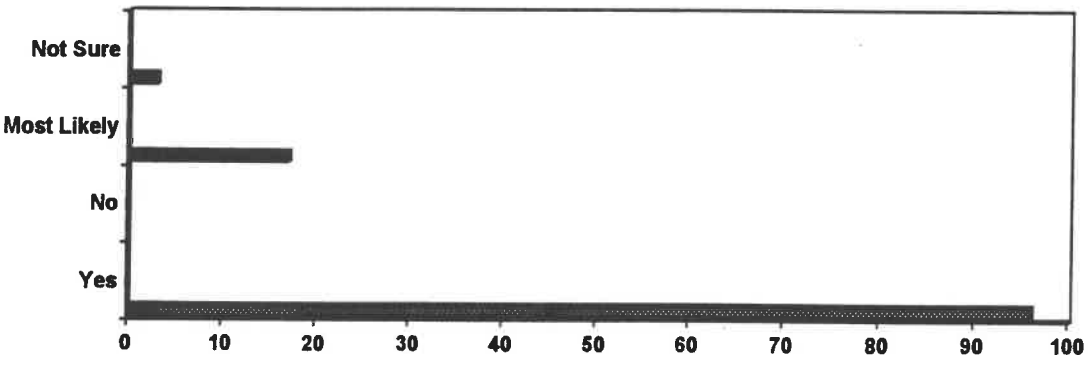


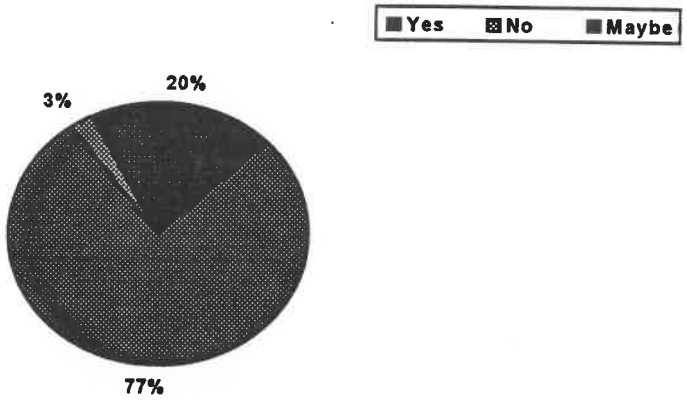
TABLE 8

CROSS RACIAL AND CROSS CULTURAL APPOINTMENTS MICHIGAN AREA

Personal Views

Cross Racial and Cross Cultural appointments are good for the church?

Pre-Test Results



Cross Racial and Cross Cultural appointments are good for the church?

Post-Test Results

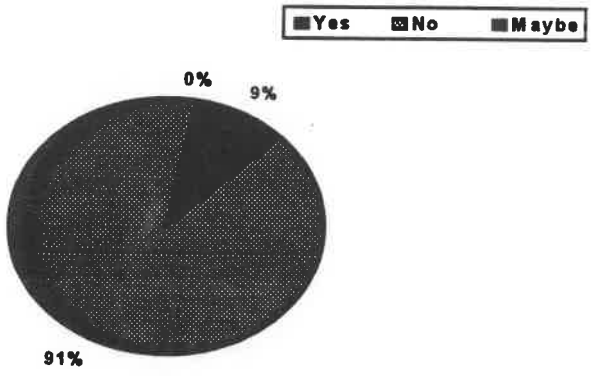


TABLE 9

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This version of the Holy Bible is most inclusive in its language about God and about gender.

The Book of Discipline of The United Methodist Church. Nashville: The United Methodist Publishing House, 1992.

This volume is the authoritative constitution and by-laws of the United Methodist Church. It contains doctrinal standards, social principles, ministry and mission, organizational and administrative guidelines for the entire denomination. This is the most current document of its kind.

Boi-Noi, Vincent Sowah. **"A Model Cross-Cultural Ministerial Training Programme: Summary of Key Resources."** D. Min. diss., Andover Newton Theological School, 1991.

This dissertation offers a wholistic pastoral training program to men and women for ministry against the back-drop of a cross-cultural situation in Ghana.

Bonhoeffer, Dietrich. **LIFE TOGETHER: A Discussion of Christian Fellowship**. New York: Harper & Row, Publishers, 1954.

A martyr of the Hitler regime, Bonhoeffer draws from the crucibles of human suffering the deep questions of Christian faith, community, and ministry.

Buttrick, David. **HOMILETIC: Moves and Structures**. Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1987.

This book outlines the methodological and practical aspects of homiletics in a teaching mode. It is philosophical and practical in its scope. It is one of the most effective homiletical tools today.

Costas, E. Orlando. **CHRIST OUTSIDE THE GATE**. New York: Orbis Books, Maryknoll, 1984.

Writing from a Hispanic evangelical background, Costas reaches into historical Christian missionary experiences. He relates these experiences with present mission trends of the Church. These are provocative essays which bring mission alive to the church. It must be a concern for the whole wide world and prayer has a major role in the process of reaching the Global Church.

Craddock, Fred B. **PREACHING**. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1985.

Here, Craddock offers a most comprehensive analysis of the art of preaching. This is a reflective and experiential masterpiece.

Daily, Richard A. **"Cross-cultural Preaching As An Instrument In The Development of A Methodist Partner Church Program."** D. Min. diss. The Wesley Theological Seminary, 1990.

This dissertation tests the belief that an effective and enriching Methodist Partner Church Program can be developed through the preaching of a cross-cultural sermon, and that such partnership can and should be developed so that preachers and congregations may deepen their global ministries and perspectives.

Easum, William. Dancing With Dinosaurs: Ministry in a Hostile and Hurting World. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1993.

In this provocative narrative, Easum warns of the Church's disappearance as did the dinosaur if the Church fails to package its ministry appropriately for an anti Christian world. This book is helpful to all who desire the Church to be relevant and effective in today's world.

Forbes, Bruce David. **"'And Obey God, Etc': Methodism and American Indians"** Methodist History, 23/1 (October 1984), 3-24.

This historical article looks into the critical issues of the ministry of early Methodist evangelists among the native population. It reveals and discusses the fact that the Methodists not only proclaimed the gospel, but also promoted white American culture as well. The implications of this two-dimensional approach to evangelism are the subjects of this article.

Gallup, George, Jr. and George O'Connell. **WHO DO AMERICANS SAY THAT I AM?** Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1986.

This book reports the findings of a number of polls, shedding light on how Americans perceive Jesus and Christianity. It is a helpful resources to those who desire a better understanding of themselves and where they stand in relation to others in their beliefs and their commitment to religion.

Gallup, George, Jr. and Sarah Jones. **100 QUESTIONS & ANSWERS: Religion in America**. Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton Religion Research Center, 1989.

Based on a range of critical questions put to the U.S. public, this book takes a hard look at religion in America from bottom to top. It surveys religious beliefs, practices, values, ethics, involvement, experiences, trends, development, and commitment across the American population.

Gorrell, Donald K. **"'Ride a Circuit Or Let It Alone': Early Practices That Kept The United Brethren, Albright People And Methodists Apart"** Methodist History, 25/1 (October 1986), 4-16.

This historical article discusses the benefits of a failed attempt by the United Brethren and Methodist Episcopal Churches and the Albright People to merge in

the early part of the 1800s. It looks at how that failure came to serve the greater need of what later became the United Methodist Church in our time.

Hall, Russell C. **"A Study of The United Methodist Itineracy System Of Placing Its Pastors In The Central New York Conference."** D.Min. diss., Drew University, 1979.

This dissertation discusses the history of the itinerant system from its origins in British Methodism to its contemporary application in the Central New York Conference of The United Methodist Church. It is a valuable aid when concerned about the meaning and purpose of itineracy.

Hels, Sharon J. **"Itineracy in the United Methodist Church Today"** **Quarterly Review**, 2/2 (Summer 1992), 4-29.

This article contains excerpts from a roundtable discussion conducted with a group of United Methodist clergy men and women from across the United States. The question of itineracy was the focus. It contains valuable information on the status, nature, impact, and meaning of the United Methodist itinerant system.

Hildebrand, Reginald F. **"Methodist Episcopal Policy on the Ordination of Black Ministers**, 1784-1864." **Methodist History**, 20/3 (April 1982), 124/142.

This essay is a survey of the official policies of the Methodist Episcopal Church concerning the ordination of black pastors from the organization of the denomination in America through 1864.

Holter, Don W. **"Some Changes Related To The Ordained Ministry In The History of American Methodism"** **Methodist History, 13 (April 1975), 177-194.**

This article chronicles the historical evolution through which American Methodism moved from preachers who were not ordained to a fully ordained clergy in the United Methodist Church today. It discusses the rationale for not having ordained preachers in the earlier years and presents reasons which caused the need to have fully ordained pastors in contemporary times.

Hulteen, Bob and Jim Wallis. **AMERICA'S ORIGINAL SIN: A Study Guide on White Racism**.

This study guide looks at issues in racism such as prejudice, power, discrimination, oppression, privilege, justice, integration, and hope. It is a collection of articles which delves into these critical issues in an honest manner.

Killinger, John. **FUNDAMENTALS OF PREACHING**. Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1985.

This book looks at the tradition of preaching in the light of Biblical primacy, sermon construction, style, delivery and content. It is a helpful tool for preachers.

Kopp, Thomas J. **"Planning A Theological Education Program In A Cross-Cultural Setting."** D. Min. diss., Western Conservative Baptist Seminary, 1988.

This dissertation offers a unique look into the impact of culture on the practical implementation of theological education in South Africa. Its conservative focus in a valuable dimension to its depth.

Lincoln, C. Eric. **THE AVENUE, CLAYTON CITY**. New York: William Morrow and Company, Inc., 1988.

This novel chronicles the experiences of black people in a fictitional city in the South. Its value lies in the fact that its revelations parallel the true experiences of real people in America. It reveals the unspoken side of American life.

Lincoln, C. Eric. **RACE, RELIGION, AND THE CONTINUING AMERICAN DILEMMA**. New York: Hill and Wang, 1984.

Lincoln presents an historical analysis of the impact of race and religion upon American social ethics and culture. Describing racism as a sickness, he argues that America will never be true to its claim of seeking freedom and justice for all its people until it confesses and repents of the sin of racism.

Markquart, Edward F. **QUEST FOR BETTER PREACHING**. Minneapolis: Augsburg Publishing House, 1985.

This book takes a critical look at preaching. It begins with criticism and ultimately helps the preacher to grasp and apply superior skills in preaching.

Messer, Donald E. **SEND ME? The Itineracy In Crisis**. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1991.

An excellent collection of issues in the United Methodist itinerant system, this book offers historical and theological foundations, and reflects upon social and missional challenges to the itineracy. Its suggestions are helpful.

Mitchell, Henry H. **CELEBRATION & EXPERIENCE IN PREACHING**. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1990.

Mitchell's book is probably the most effective preaching manual available today. It takes a holistic approach to preaching, offering methodologies, styles, forms, and vehicles which enable the preacher to preach to the whole person.

Peluso, Gary E. **"Clergy Authority: To What Shall We Compare It?"** Quarterly Review, 11-1 (Spring 1991), 43-55.
This article discusses competing understandings of the nature, scope, and purpose of clergy authority in the United Methodist Church today.

Schreckenost, George Earl. **"The Effect of Latent Racial, Ethnic, And Sexual Biases on Open Itineracy in East Ohio Conference, The United Methodist Church."** D. Min. diss., Lancaster Theological Seminary, 1984.
This dissertation reveals the nature and impact of latent racial, ethnic, and sexual biases on how pastoral appointments are made in the East Ohio Conference, of The United Methodist Church. It is a valuable record for anyone who is concerned about open itineracy.

Shockley, Grant S. **HERITAGE AND HOPE: The African Preserve in United Methodism**. Nashville, Tennessee: Abingdon Press, 1991.
This volume presents a study of the past and the present of the racial/ethnic membership of the United Methodist Church. Shockley links the past and present with the future, properly examining the role of the Black people in the United Methodist Church. He highlights the achievements and contributions of the Blacks and calls for the empowering of Black United Methodists.

Stein, K. James. **"Baltimore 1784: Historical, Theological Ecclesiastical"**. Methodist History, 23/1 (October 1984) 25-43.
Discusses how the December 24, 1784 conference, though humble in its attendance and location, led to an independent church with its own fully ordained ministry, sacramental life, formalized liturgy, doctrinal norms, ethical standards, and a well-defined sense of mission.

Thomas, James S. **Methodism's Racial Dilemma: The Story of the Central Jurisdiction**. Nashville, Tennessee: Abingdon Press, 1992.
This is an historical analysis of the formation, role and purpose of the Central Jurisdiction of the Methodist Church in the lives of African American people and of the Methodist denomination prior to the union which formed The United Methodist Church in 1968. Thomas recounts this history with experience and passion.

Wimberly, Anne Streaty and Edward Powell Wimberly. Language of Hospitality: Intercultural Relations in the Household of God. Nashville: Cokesbury, 1991.
This guidebook offers practical learning skills to persons and congregations seeking acquaintence with intercultural relationships in the Church.